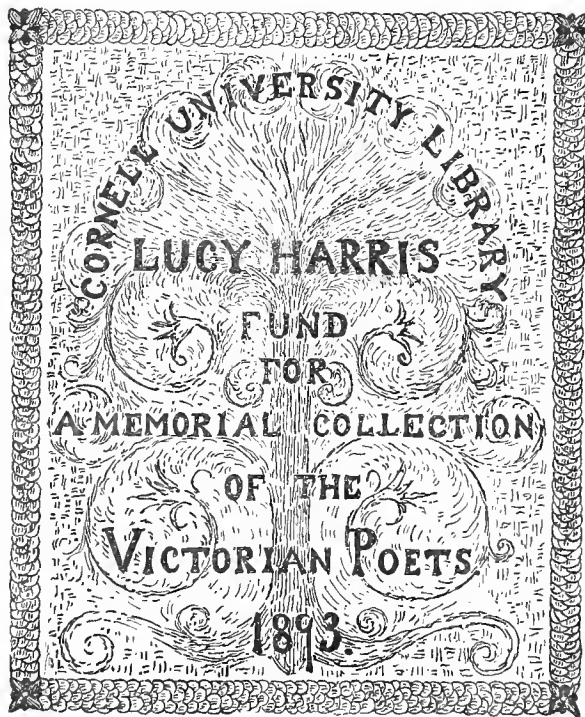


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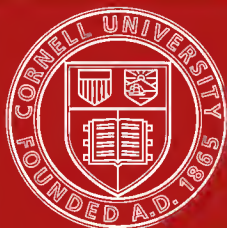
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THE WRITERS OF VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ.

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THE authorities for these notes, in addition to the biographical and bibliographical notes scattered through various anthologies and volumes of selections, are, *Victorian Poets*, by Edmund Clarence Stedman, eleventh edition, 1886; *English Poetesses*, by Eric S. Robertson; *Celebrities of the Century*, edited by Lloyd Sanders, 1887; *Men of the Reign*, 1885, and *Men of the Time*, twelfth edition, 1887, both edited by Thomas Humphry Ward.

The authors marked with an asterisk (*) are still (1887) living.

*ARNOLD, EDWIN, C. S. I. (1832). Educated at King's College, London, and University College, Oxford, where in 1852 he won the Newdigate prize by his English poem, *The Feast of Belshazzar*. Shortly after his graduation in honors in 1854 he was appointed Principal of the Government Sanscrit College at Poona, in the Bombay Presidency, and Fellow of the University of Bombay. He resigned this position in 1861 to become connected with *The Daily Telegraph*, of which he has been editor for many years. As editor of this paper he arranged in 1873 the expedition of Mr. George Smith to conduct the excavation at Kouyunjik on the site of Nineveh, and a year later the expedition of Mr. Henry M. Stanley to Africa, which was undertaken at the joint expense of *The Daily Telegraph* and *New York Herald*. He is an accomplished Sanscrit scholar, and upon the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India he was named a Companion of the Star of

India. Out of regard for his *Light of Asia*, the King of Siam decorated him with the Order of the White Elephant, and in 1876 he received the Second Class of the Imperial Order of the Medjidie from the Sultan. He has published *Griselda* (Drama), 1856; *Hero and Leander*, translation from the Greek of *Musæus*, 1874; *The Indian Song of Songs*, a metrical paraphrase from the Sanscrit of *The Gita Govinda of Jayadeva*, 1875; *The Light of Asia*, 1879; *Pearls of the Faith*, 1883; *Indian Idyls*, a metrical translation from the Sanscrit of *The Mahābhārata*, 1883; *The Secret of Death* (translation from the Sanscrit) *and other Poems*, 1885; *The Song Celestial*, a metrical translation from the Sanscrit of the *Mahābhārata*, 1885.

* ARNOLD, MATTHEW, LL.D. (1822). Son of the famous Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and born at Laleham near Staines. He was educated at Winchester and Rugby, and elected Scholar of Balliol College, Oxford, in 1840. Three years later he won the Newdigate prize for English verse by his poem *Cromwell*, graduated in honors a year afterwards, and was elected Fellow of Oriel College in 1845. In 1847 the third Lord Lansdowne nominated him his private secretary, and he continued to act in that capacity until 1851, when he was appointed Lay Inspector of Schools under the Committee of Council on Education. In connection with his official duties he visited the Continent in 1859, and the researches made in this and a subsequent visit led to the publication of a valuable volume on continental methods of education. In 1857 he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, which chair he occupied for a period of ten years. In 1869 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Edinburgh, and a year afterwards from Oxford, and in 1871 the Order of Commander of the Crown of Italy was conferred on him by the King of Italy in acknowledgment of his care of the young Duke of Genoa, who lived in Mr. Arnold's family while pursuing his studies in England. In 1883-84 he made a lecturing tour in the United States, and in 1886 he resigned the position of Lay Inspector which he had held for nearly thirty-five years. His poetical publications are: *The Strayed Reveller and other Poems*, 1848; *Empedocles and other Poems*, 1853; *Merope*, a tragedy after the antique, 1867; *New Poems*, 1869.

* ASHE, THOMAS, THE REV. (1836). He has published *Poems*, 1859; *The Sorrows of Hypsipyle* (Drama), 1867; *Edith*, 1873; *Songs Now and Then*, 1876; *Poems*, 1886.

* AUSTIN, ALFRED (1835). Born at Headingley near Leeds, and as both his parents were Roman Catholics he was educated at Stonyhurst College, and afterwards at St. Mary's College, Oscott, and took his degree at the University of London in 1853. Educated for the law, he was called to the bar of the Inner Temple in 1857; but in 1861 he abandoned that profession to devote himself entirely to literature. He acted for considerable time as leader writer and correspondent of *The Standard*, and as a Conservative in politics made two unsuccessful attempts to enter Parliament, for Taunton in 1865, and for Dewsbury in 1880. He is at present one of the editors of *The National Review*, which was founded as a Conservative publication in 1883. He has published *Randolph*, 1854; *The Season, a Satire*, 1861; *My Satire and its Censors*, 1861; *The Human Tragedy*, 1862, which was reissued considerably amended and altered in 1876; *The Golden Age, a Satire*, 1871; *Interludes*, 1872; *Rome or Death*, 1873; *The Tower of Babel* (Drama), 1874; *Leszko, the Bastard: a Tale of Polish Grief*, 1877; *Savonarola*, 1881; *Soliloquies in Song*, 1882; *At the Gate of the Convent*, 1885. He is also the author of three novels and several political letters and essays.

* BLIND, MATHILDE. Miss Blind is a step-daughter of Karl Blind, and has achieved considerable reputation as editor and critic of Shelley's works. She has published *Poems*, 1867; *The Prophecy of St. Oran and other Poems*, 1881.

* BUCHANAN, ROBERT (1841). Born at Caverswall, Staffordshire, and son of a socialist lecturer and editor. He was educated at Glasgow University, where his intimate friend and companion was the poet David Gray, with whom he occupied the same lodgings in London for a short time in 1860. In 1872 his essay, *The Fleshly School of Poetry*, published in *The Contemporary Review*, an attack on the poems of Dante G. Rossetti, led to a bitter controversy with that author, in which Mr. Swinburne became subsequently involved. Mr. Buchanan

subsequently retracted some of his charges, and in a letter written to Mr. T. Hall Caine after Rossetti's death, frankly admitted that his attack on the latter was unjust, and expressed regret that the controversy should ever have taken place. In 1874 his comedy *A Madcap Prince* was produced at the Haymarket, and he has since that time established for himself a reputation of being a very clever playwright. In 1876 he published his first novel, *The Shadow of the Sword*. He has been for many years closely connected with *The Contemporary Review*. In 1870 he was awarded a pension of £100 per annum from the Civil List in consideration of his literary merit as a poet. He has published *Undertones*, 1860; *Idyls and Legends of Inverburn*, 1865; *London Poems*, 1866; *North Coast Poems*, 1867; *The Book of Orm*, 1870; *Napoleon Fallen* (a lyrical drama), 1871; *The Drama of Kings*, 1871; *St. Abe*, 1871; *White Rose and Red, a Love Story*, 1873. A collected edition of his poetical works was published in 1874.

COLLINS, MORTIMER (1827-1876). Born at Plymouth, and connected during his life with various newspapers, and especially with the *London Globe*. He was, in addition to being a journalist and poet, a very successful novelist. His first novel, *Who is He?* was published in 1865. His volumes of verse are: *Summer Songs*, 1860; *Idyls and Rhymes*, 1865; *The Inn of Strange Meetings, and other Poems*, 1871.

* DOBSON, HENRY AUSTIN (1840). Born at Plymouth, and at the age of eight or nine taken by his parents to Holyhead, in the island of Anglesea. He received a desultory education in Wales and Germany. Originally intended for an engineer, it was finally decided that he should enter the Civil Service, and in 1856 he was appointed to a clerkship in the Board of Trade, where he has remained ever since, having risen to the position of a First-Class clerk. To Mr. Dobson belongs the credit of being among the first to introduce into English poetry the French form of verse, the rondeau, ballade, villanelle, etc., which have now become so popular. He has published *Vignettes in Rhyme and Vers de Société*, 1873; *Proverbs in Porcelain*, 1877; *Old World Idylls*, 1883; *At the Sign of the Lyre*, 1885.

*EVANS, SEBASTIAN, LL.D. (1830). Born at Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, and educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, from which he graduated B.A. in 1853, M.A. in 1857, and LL.D. in 1868. In 1857 he became manager of the artistic department in Messrs. Chance Brothers & Co.'s glass works, and nine years later editor of *The Birmingham Daily Gazette*. He resigned the editorship of this paper in 1870, and three years afterwards was called to the bar, joining the Oxford Circuit. In 1878 he removed from Birmingham to London, where he took an active part in the organization of the Conservative party in connection with the National Union of Conservative Associations, and in 1881 he became the editor of *The People*, a Sunday newspaper, and one of the official organs of the Conservative party. He has published *Brother Fabian's MS. and other Poems*, 1865; *In the Studio; a Decade of Poems*, 1875.

*GOSSE, EDMUND WILLIAM (1849). Born in London, and educated at Devonshire. In 1867 he was appointed assistant librarian at the British Museum, and in 1875 became Translator to the Board of Trade. Prior to receiving the last appointment he spent two years in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, and afterwards considerable time in Holland, for the purpose of studying the language and literature of those countries, where he gathered the material for his *Northern Studies*, a volume of essays on Scandinavian, Dutch, and German literature. In the spring of 1884 he was elected Clark Lecturer in English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge; and in the fall of the same year visited America at the invitation of the Lowell Institute, Boston, where he delivered a course of lectures upon the rise of classical poetry in England, subsequently repeated before the Johns Hopkins University, Yale College, and elsewhere. In 1886 his *The Masque of Painters* was performed by the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colors. He has published, in conjunction with a friend, *Madrigals, Songs, and Sonnets*, 1870; *On Viol and Flute*, 1873; *King Erik* (Drama), 1876; *The Unknown Lover* (Drama), 1878; *New Poems*, 1879; *Firdausi in Exile and other Poems*, 1886. He is also the author of several essays, and the editor of a complete edition of the works of Gray.

* HAKE, THOMAS GORDON, M.D. (1819). He has published *Parables and Tales*; *New Symbols*; *Legends of the Morrow*; *Madeline*; *Maiden Ecstasy*.

* KING, HARRIET ELEANOR HAMILTON (1840). Daughter of Admiral W. A. B. Hamilton, and in 1863 married Mr. Henry S. King, the banker and publisher. She has published *Aspromonte*, 1869; *The Disciples*, 1873; *Book of Dreams*, 1883.

* LANG, ANDREW (1844). Born at Selkirk, and educated at St. Andrew's University and Balliol College, Oxford, and in 1868 elected a Fellow of Merton College of the latter University. He is connected with *The Daily News*, and a constant contributor to current periodicals. He is remarkable for the versatility of his attainments, having distinguished himself both by his graceful and humorous articles on ephemeral subjects and his scholarly contributions to French literature and the science of comparative mythology. His volumes of verse are: *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*, 1872; *Ballades in Blue China*, 1881; *Helen of Troy*, 1882; *Rhymes à la Mode*, 1884. There was also an authorized collection of some of his poems published in America, under the title *Ballades and Verses Vain*.

* LOCKER-LAMPSON, FREDERICK (1821). For many years in the Admiralty as Précis Writer. He is a contributor of prose and verse to the various English periodicals, and also known for his collection of drawings by the Old Masters and his library of rare Elizabethan literature. His second wife was the daughter of Sir Curtis Lampson, Bart. of Rowfant, after whose death Mr. Locker added the name of Lampson to his own. He has published *London Lyrics*, 1862; *Patchwork*, (prose and verse), 1879.

* LYTTON, THE RIGHT HON. EDWARD ROBERT BULWER-LYTTON, EARL OF, G. C. B. (1831). The only son of the novelist, and educated at Harrow. In 1849 he entered the diplomatic service, and served as an attaché to various embassies, the earliest being that at Washington. In 1863 he was promoted to be Secretary of Legation at Copenhagen, and the following

year married the daughter of the Hon. Edward Villiers. In 1874 he was appointed Minister to Lisbon, and in 1876 Viceroy of India. During his Viceroyalty he presided at the Delhi durbar, at which Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, and in 1879 a mad Eurasian made an attempt to assassinate him. In 1877 the Queen conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Civil Division of the Order of the Bath. In 1880 he was made Earl of Lytton, of Lytton in the county of Derby, and Viscount Knebworth, of Knebworth in the county of Herts, and that same year resigned his Viceroyalty. He has published *Clytemnestra and other Poems*, 1855; *The Wanderer: a Collection of Poems in Many Lands*, 1858; *Lucile*, 1860; in conjunction with 'Neville Temple' (Mr. Julian Fane), *Tannhäuser, or the Battle of the Bards*, 1861; *Chronicles and Characters*, 1868; *Orval, or the Fool of Time*, 1869; *Fables in Song*, 1874; *Glenaveril, or the Metamorphoses*, 1885.

MARSTON, PHILIP BOURKE (1850-1887). Born in London, and son of Dr. Westland Marston, the dramatist. When quite a child he received an accidental blow in the eye, which eventually produced total blindness. From the age of twenty his life was almost tragic in the personal losses which he sustained. His sister Eleanor was the wife of the poet Arthur O'Shaughnessy, and he himself numbered among his intimate friends many of the younger generation of London poets. He was a frequent contributor to the American magazines and monthlies. Marston was the subject of Mrs. Craik's *Philip my King*, whose godson he was. He published *Song-Tide*, 1870; *All in All*, 1875; *Wind Voices*, 1883.

*MERIVALE, HERMAN CHARLES (1839). Born in London, and educated at Harrow and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1861. Three years later he was called to the bar at the Inner Temple, but in 1879 was obliged to give up his profession on account of ill health, since which time he has devoted himself almost entirely to literature. His poetical works are: *The White Pilgrim and other Poems*, 1883; *Florinda and other Poems*, 1884. He is also known as a successful playwright.

*MORRIS, LEWIS (1834). Born near Cærmearthen, and educated at Sherborne School and Jesus College, Oxford, where he obtained a Chancellor's prize in 1855. He was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1861, and practised chiefly as a conveyancing counsel until 1880. He has occupied various minor political and official positions, and in 1881 stood in the Liberal interest for the Cærmearthen Boroughs, but retired before election, and five years later was defeated for Pembroke Boroughs. In 1877 he was elected an Honorary Fellow of Jesus College, and in 1879 was appointed a Knight of the Order of the Saviour (of Greece). He has published *Songs of Two Worlds*, Vol. I., 1871; Vol. II., 1874; Vol. III., 1875; *The Epic of Hades*, Book II., 1876; Books I. and III., 1877; *Gwen, a Drama in Monologue*, 1879; *The Ode of Life*, 1880; *Songs Unsung*, 1883; *Gycia (Drama)*, 1886.

*MYERS, ERNEST. He has published *The Puritans; Poems; The Defence of Rome and other Poems*, 1880; *The Judgment of Prometheus and other Poems*, 1886.

O'SHAUGHNESSY, ARTHUR WILLIAM EDGAR (1844-1881). He was an ichthyologist by profession, and entering the British Museum as a transcriber, was two years afterwards removed to the Natural History Department, where he remained till his death. He published *An Epic of Women*, 1870; *Lays of France*, 1872; *Music and Moonlight*, 1874; *Songs of a Worker* (posthumously), 1881.

*PENNEL, HENRY CHOLMONDELEY- (1837). He entered the public service in 1853, and after serving in various departments of the Admiralty, was appointed one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Fisheries in 1866. In 1875 he was selected by the English Government, at the request of the Khedive of Egypt, to initiate and assist in carrying out certain commercial reforms, and was afterwards nominated Director-General of Commerce for the Interior. During 1864-65 he edited *The Fisherman's Magazine and Review*, and is a frequent contributor to the current English magazines and reviews. He has published *Puck on Pegasus*, 1861; *Crescent*, 1866; *Modern Babylon*, 1873; *The*

Muses of Mayfair, 1874; *Pegasus Re-saddled*, 1877; *From Grave to Gay*, a volume of selections from his complete poems, 1884. He has also contributed largely to the literature of ichthyology and practice of angling, and is a distinguished sportsman.

* PFEIFFER, MRS. EMILY DAVIS. She has published *Gerard's Monument*, 1873; *Poems*, 1876; *Glan-Alarch: His Silence and Song*, 1877; *Quarterman's Grace, and other Poems*, 1879; *Under the Aspens*, 1882.

* ROBINSON, AGNES MARY FRANCES (1857). Born at Leamington, and educated at Brussels and the University College of London, where she made a special study of the Greek language and literature. She has published *A Handful of Honeysuckles*, 1878; *The Crowned Hippolytus* (a metrical translation from Euripides), containing also a few new poems, 1880; *The New Arcadia, and other Poems*, 1884; *An Italian Garden: a Book of Songs*, 1886. She is also the author of a single novel, *Arden*, and one or two other prose works.

* ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA GEORGINA (1830). Daughter of Gabriels Rossetti, an Italian poet-patriot, who removed to London in 1821, and sister of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Her earliest efforts at verse were made in a small volume privately printed by her maternal grandfather, G. Polidori, in 1847, and entitled *Verses by Christina G. Rossetti, dedicated to her Mother*. She also contributed to *The Germ*, the organ of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, under the pseudonym of Ellen Alleyn. She has published *Goblin Market and other Poems*, 1862; *The Prince's Progress and other Poems*, 1870.

* SCOTT, WILLIAM BELL (1811). Born at St. Leonards near Edinburgh, and distinguished as poet, painter, etcher, architect, and man of letters. He was educated at the Edinburgh High School, and subsequently entered the antique class of the Government Academy, and in 1832 drew from the antique in the British Museum. In 1838 he exhibited his first considerable picture, *The Old English Ballad Singer*, and six years later he

undertook, at the request of the Board of Trade, the establishment of a school of art at Newcastle-on-Tyne. In 1851 he published a series of allegorical etchings, *Chorea Sancti Viti, or Steps in the Life of Prince Legion*, and during 1854-59, and in 1863-64, he was occupied on his large paintings illustrating the history of the English Border, and the ballad of Chevy Chase, for Wellington Hall, the seat of Sir Walter Trevelyan, Bart., and in 1882 he secured for himself the title of architect by building a hall in a mediæval manner at Penkill Castle. He was for many years an art examiner under the Education Board, which position he resigned in 1885. His poetical works are: *Hades, or the Transit and the Progress of Mind, an Ode*, 1838; *The Year of the World, a Philosophical Poem on Redemption from the Fall*, 1846; *Poems by a Painter*, 1854; *Ballads, Studies from Nature, Sonnets, etc.*, a collection from his poems, and decorated with etchings by himself and Mr. L. Alma-Tadema, 1875; *The Poet's Harvest Home*, 1882.

* SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES (1837). Born at Pimlico, and in 1857 entered Balliol College, Oxford. While here he contributed to a periodical entitled *Undergraduate Papers*, edited by Mr. John Nichol. He left the University without taking his degree, and afterwards visited Florence, where he spent some time with the late Walter Savage Landor. In 1866 his *Poems and Ballads* appeared, which were severely criticised, and led to the publication of a bitter retort by the young poet, *Notes on Poems and Reviews*. He has published *The Queen Mother and Rosamond* (Dramas), 1860; *Atalanta in Culydon* (Tragedy on the Greek Model), 1865; *Chastelard* (Drama), 1865; *Poems and Ballads*, 1866; *A Song of Italy*, 1867; in pamphlet form, *Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic, September 4th*, 1870, 1870; *Songs before Sunrise*, 1871; *Bothwell* (Drama), 1874; *Songs of Two Nations*, comprising *A Song of Italy, Ode on the French Republic*, and *Diræ*, a series of political Sonnets first contributed to *The Examiner*, 1875; *Eretheus* (Tragedy on the Greek Model), 1876; *Poems and Ballads, Second Series*, 1878; *Songs of the Spring-Tides*, 1880; *Mary Stuart* (Drama), 1881; *Tristram of Lyonesse*, 1882; *A Century of Roundels*, 1883; *A Midsummer Holiday, and other Poems*, 1884; *Marino Faliero*

(Drama), 1885. He is also the author of a number of critical essays and volumes.

* SYMONDS, JOHN ADDINGTON. Born at Bristol, and educated at Harrow and Balliol College, Oxford, being elected to a Fellowship at Magdalen College in that University, in 1872, which he vacated by his marriage. For many years he has been compelled by reason of ill-health to reside at Davos-platz in the Grisons. His poetical works are: *The Sonnets of Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Campanella* (translation), 1878; *Many Moods; New and Old*, 1880; *Anima Figura*, 1882; *Vagabunduli Libellus*, 1884; *Wine, Women, and Song* (translation of Latin Student songs), 1884. He is also a distinguished critic of Greek and Italian poetry.

THOMSON, JAMES (1834-1882). Born at Port Glasgow, and son of a seafaring man. At the death of his mother when he was about six years old, he was placed in the Caledonian Orphan Asylum. Upon leaving this institution, he resolved to qualify for the post of a schoolmaster in the army, and joined the service as assistant-schoolmaster, the garrison which he joined being stationed at Ballincollig, near Cork. It was here that he met and became engaged to a young girl, the daughter of the armorer-sergeant of a regiment. Two years later he was sent to the Training College at Chelsea, to finish his course of studies, and a little more than a year afterwards, he received the news of the sudden death of his betrothed, which became a life-long sorrow with him. In 1854 he left the Training School, and served with various regiments for the next eight years, having in the mean time become one of the earliest contributors to *The National Reformer*, which had been established in 1860. In 1862 he left the army, and served for a time in the office of Mr. Bradlaugh, who was then acting as manager clerk to a solicitor named Levison. In 1872 he visited America, in the capacity of secretary to a company which was formed to work an American silver mine, and the following year served a short time as special correspondent of the *New York World*, to report the Carlist insurrection in Spain. He subsequently formed a connection with *Cope's Tobacco Plant*, a monthly periodical, which he held to the time of his death. Most of his poems first appeared in this

paper, and *The National Review*. He published *The City of Dreadful Night and other Poems*, 1880; *Vane's Story, Weddah and Om-el-Bonain, and other Poems*, 1881; *A Voice from the Nile and other Poems* (posthumously), 1884. He was also the author of a volume of prose, *Essays and Phantasies*, and his poem *Shelley* appeared with a critical essay on that poet in 1887.

* WEBSTER, AUGUSTA (1840). Born at Poole, Dorsetshire, and daughter of Vice-Admiral Davies. In 1863 she was married to Mr. Thomas Webster, Fellow and Law Lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1879 she was elected on the School Board, Chelsea, and again returned in 1885. She has contributed articles to *The Examiner* on the subject of women's franchise, in which she takes a great interest. She has published *Blanche Lisle and other Poems*, 1860; *Lilian Gray*, 1864; *Prometheus Bound* (translation from Æschylus), 1866; *Dramatic Studies*, 1866; *A Woman Sold and other Poems*, 1867; *Medea* (translation from Euripides), 1868; *Portraits*, 1870; *The Auspicious Day* (Drama), 1872; *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*, 1874; *Disguises*, 1879; *A Book of Rhymes*, 1881; *In a Day*, 1882.

POETS
OF THE
LATTER HALF OF THE REIGN.

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MATTHEW ARNOLD.

FROM 'SOHRAB AND RUSTUM.'¹

THEN, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
And showed a sign in faint vermilion points
Pricked; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
An emperor's gift — at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands —
So delicately pricked the sign appeared
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that griffin, which of old reared Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,
A helpless babe, among the mountain-rocks;
Him that kind creature found, and reared, and loved —
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,
And himself scanned it long with mournful eyes,
And then he touched it with his hand and said: —
 'How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?'
He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood

Speechless ; and then he uttered one sharp cry :
O boy — thy father ! — and his voice choked there.
 And then a dark cloud passed before his eyes,
 And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.
 But Sohrab crawled to where he lay, and cast
 His arms about his neck, and kissed his lips,
 And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,
 Trying to call him back to life ; and life
 Came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,
 And they stood wide with horror ; and he seized
 In both his hands the dust which lay around,
 And threw it on his head, and smirched his hair, —
 His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms ;
 And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,
 And his sobs choked him ; and he clutched his sword,
 To draw it, and forever let life out.
 But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
 And with a soothing voice he spake, and said : —
 ‘ Father, forbear ! for I but meet to-day
 The doom which at my birth was written down
 In Heaven, and thou art Heaven’s unconscious hand.
 Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
 When first I saw thee ; and thy heart spoke too,
 I know it ! but fate trod those promptings down
 Under its iron heel ; fate, fate engaged
 The strife, and hurled me on my father’s spear.
 But let us speak no more of this ! I find
 My father, let me feel that I have found !
 Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
 My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
 And wash them with thy tears, and say : *My son !*
 Quick ! quick ! for numbered are my sands of life,
 And swift ; for like the lightning to this field
 I came, and like the wind I go away —
 Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind ;
 But it was writ in Heaven that this should be.’

So said he, and his voice released the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth ; he cast
His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,
And kissed him. And awe fell on both the hosts,
When they saw Rustum's grief ; and Ruksh, the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other, moved
His head, as if inquiring what their grief
Might mean ; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears rolled down, and caked the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said : —

‘ Ruksh, now thou grieveest ; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should then have rotted on their nimble joints,
When first they bore thy master to this field ! ’

But Sohrab looked upon the horse and said : —
‘ Is this, then, Ruksh ? How often, in past days,
My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed,
My terrible father's terrible horse ! and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane !
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I ;
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuffed the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the River of Helmund, and the Lake
Of Zirrah ; and the aged Zal himself
Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soaked with wine,
And said : *O Ruksh ! bear Rustum well !* — but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrowed face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream ;
But lodged among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,

And the black Toorkmun tents ; and only drunk
 The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
 Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
 The northern Sir ; and this great Oxus stream,
 The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die.'

Then, with a heavy groan, Rustum bewailed : —
 ' Oh, that its waves were flowing over me !
 Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
 Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head !'

But, with a grave, mild voice, Sohrab replied : —
 ' Desire not that, my father ! thou must live.
 For some are born to do great deeds, and live,
 As some are born to be obscured, and die.
 Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
 And reap a second glory in thine age ;
 Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
 But come ! thou seest this great host of men
 Which follow me ; I pray thee, slay not these !
 Let me entreat for them ; what have they done ?
 They followed me, my hope, my fame, my star.
 Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
 But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,
 But carry me with thee to Seistan,
 And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,
 Thou, and the snow-haired Zal, and all thy friends.
 And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
 And heap a stately mound above my bones,
 And plant a far-seen pillar over all.
 That so the passing horseman on the waste
 May see my tomb a great way off, and cry :
Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill !
 And I be not forgotten in my grave.'

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied : —
 ' Fear not ! as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
 So shall it be ; for I will burn my tents,

And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host ; yea, let them go !
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace !
What should I do with slaying any more ?
For would that all whom I have ever slain
Might be once more alive ; my bitterest foes,
And they who were called champions in their time,
And through whose death I won that fame I have —
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown,
So thou mightest live too, my son, my son !
Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine ! and I might die, not thou ;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan ;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine ;
And say : *O son, I weep thee not too sore,
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end !*
But now in blood and battles was my youth,
And full of blood and battles is my age,
And I shall never end this life of blood.'

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied : —
' A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man !
But thou shalt yet have peace ; only not now,
Not yet ! but thou shalt have it on that day,
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
Thou and the other peers of Kai Khosroo,
Returning home over the salt blue sea,

From laying thy dear master in his grave.'

And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face, and said : —
'Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea !
Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure.'

He spoke ; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased
His wound's imperious anguish ; but the blood
Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flowed with the stream — all down his cold white side
The crimson torrent ran, dim now and soiled,
Like the soiled tissue of white violets
Left, freshly gathered, on their native bank,
By children whom their nurses call with haste
Indoors from the sun's eye ; his head drooped low,
His limbs grew slack ; motionless, white, he lay —
White, with eyes closed ; only when heavy gasps,
Deep heavy gasps quivering through all his frame,
Convulsed him back to life, he opened them,
And fixed them feebly on his father's face ;
Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
Unwillingly the spirit fled away,
Regretting the warm mansion which it left,
And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead ;
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-reared
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now mid their broken flights of steps
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side —
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.

And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darkened all ; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires

Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hushed Chorasman waste,
Under the solitary moon; — he flowed
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large; then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcelled Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles —
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,
A foiled circuitous wanderer — till at last
The longed-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

THE SCHOLAR-GYPSY.²

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head;
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green,
Come, shepherd, and again renew the quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of late —
 In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
 His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,
 And in the sun all morning binds his sheaves,
 Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use —
 Here will I sit and wait,
 While to my ear from uplands far away
 The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
 With distant cries of reapers in the corn —
 All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
 And here till sun-down, shepherd ! will I be.
 Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
 And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
 Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep ;
 And air-swept lindens yield
 Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
 Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
 And bower me from the August-sun with shade ;
 And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book —
 Come, let me read the oft-read tale again !
 The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
 Of shining parts and quick inventive brain,
 Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
 One summer-morn forsook
 His friends, and went to learn the gypsy-lore,
 And roamed the world with that wild brotherhood,
 And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
 But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
 Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
 Met him, and of his way of life inquired ;
 Whereat he answered, that the gypsy-crew,

His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will.
'And I,' he said, 'the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart;
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill.'

This said, he left them, and returned no more. —
But rumors hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of gray,
The same the gypsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone ale-house in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frocked boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

But, mid their drink and clatter, he would fly.
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer! on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer-heats,
Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm, green-muffled Cumner hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground!
Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer-nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the punt's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,

And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
 Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,
 And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more ! —
 Maidens, who from the distant hamlets come
 To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
 Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
 Or cross a stile into the public way ;
 Oft thou has given them store
 Of flowers — the frail-leafed, white anemony,
 Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer eves,
 And purple orchises with spotted leaves —
 But none hath words she can report of thee !

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time 's here
 In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
 Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass,
 Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering Thames,
 To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
 Have often passed thee near
 Sitting upon the river-bank o'ergrown ;
 Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
 Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air —
 But, when they came from bathing, thou wast gone !

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
 Where at her open door the housewife darns,
 Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
 To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
 Children, who early range these slopes and late
 For cresses from the rills,
 Have known thee eying, all an April-day,
 The springing pastures and the feeding kine ;
 And marked thee, when the stars come out and shine,
 Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood —
 Where most the gypsies by the turf-edged way
 Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
 With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of gray,
 Above the forest-ground called Thessaly —
 The blackbird picking food
 Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
 So often has he known thee past him stray,
 Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
 And waiting for the spark from heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
 Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
 Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
 Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
 Thy face toward Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
 And thou hast climbed the hill,
 And gained the white brow of the Cumner range;
 Turned once to watch, while thick the snow-flakes fall,
 The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall —
 Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what — I dream! Two hundred years are flown
 Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
 And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
 That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
 To learn strange arts, and join a gypsy-tribe.
 And thou from earth art gone
 Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid —
 Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
 Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave,
 Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

— No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
 For what wears out the life of mortal men?
 'Tis that from change to change their being rolls;
 'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,

Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
 And numb the elastic powers.
 Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
 And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
 To the just-pausing Genius we remit
 Our well-worn life, and are — what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou perish, so?
 Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire;
 Else wert thou long since numbered with the dead!
 Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire!
 The generations of thy peers are fled,
 And we ourselves shall go;
 But thou possessest an immortal lot,
 And we imagine thee exempt from age,
 And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
 Because thou hadst — what we, alas! have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
 Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
 Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
 Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
 Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings
 O life unlike to ours!
 Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
 Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
 And each half lives a hundred different lives;
 Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and we,
 Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
 Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
 Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
 Whose vague resolves never have been fulfilled;
 For whom each year we see
 Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;

Who hesitate and falter life away,
 And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day —
 Ah ! do not we, wanderer ! await it too ?

Yes, we await it ! — but it still delays,
 And then we suffer ! and among us one,
 Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
 His seat upon the intellectual throne ;
 And all his store of sad experience he
 Lays bare of wretched days ;
 Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
 And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
 And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
 And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest ! and we others pine,
 And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
 And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear ;
 With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
 Sad patience, too near neighbor to despair —
 But none has hope like thine !
 Thou through the fields and through the woods dost stray,
 Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
 Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
 And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
 And life ran gayly as the sparkling Thames ;
 Before this strange disease of modern life,
 With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
 Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife —
 Fly hence, our contact fear !
 Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood !
 Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
 From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
 Wave us away, and keep thy solitude !

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
 Still clutching the inviolable shade,
 With a free, onward impulse brushing through,
 By night, the silvered branches of the glade —
 Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
 On some mild pastoral slope
 Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales
 Freshen thy flowers as in former years
 With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
 From the dark dingles, to the nightingales !

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly !
 For strong the infection of our mental strife,
 Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest ;
 And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
 Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
 Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
 Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd thy powers,
 And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made ;
 And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
 Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles !
 — As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
 Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
 Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
 The fringes of a southward-facing brow
 Among the Ægean isles ;
 And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
 Freight'd with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
 Green, bursting figs, and tunnies steeped in brine —
 And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted masters of the waves —
 And snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail ;
 And day and night held on indignantly
 O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,

Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the western straits, and unbent sails
There where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come ;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

DOVER BEACH.

THE sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits : —on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,

Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another ! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

PHILOMELA.

HARK ! ah, the nightingale —
The tawny-throated !
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst !
What triumph ! hark ! — what pain !
O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewildered brain
That wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-world pain —
Say, will it never heal ?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy racked heart and brain
Afford no balm ?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass.
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild ?
Dost thou again peruse

With hot cheeks and seared eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?

Dost thou once more essay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephisian vale?

Listen, Eugenia —
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves !
Again — thou hearest ?
Eternal passion !
Eternal pain !

IMMORTALITY.

FOILED by our fellow-men, depressed, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, *Patience ! in another life*, we say,
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne.

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings ? or will they,
Who failed under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervors of the heavenly morn ?

No, no ! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun ;
And he who flagged not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing — only he,
His soul well knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

EAST LONDON.

'T WAS August, and the fierce sun overhead
 Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
 And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
 In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said :
 'Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene ?' —
 'Bravely !' said he ; 'for I of late have been
 Much cheered with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*'

O human soul ! as long as thou canst so
 Set up a mark of everlasting light,
 Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam —
 Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night !
 Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

FROM 'THE BOOK OF ORM.'³*INSCRIPTION TO F. W. C.*

FLOWERS pluckt upon a grave by moonlight, pale
And suffering, from the spiritual light
They grew in: these, with all the love and blessing
That prayers can gain of God, I send to thee!

If one of these poor flowers be worthy thee,
The sweetest Soul that I have known on earth,
The tenderest Soul that I can hope to know,
Hold that one flower, and kneel, and pray for me.

Pray for me, Comrade! Close to thee I creep,
Touching thy raiment: thy good eyes are calm;
But see! the fitful fever in mine eyes —
Pray for me! — bid all good men pray for me!

If Love will serve, lo! how I love my Friend —
If Reverence, lo! how I reverence him —
If Faith be asked in something beautiful,
Lo! what a splendor is my faith in him!

Now, as thou risest gently from thy knees,
Must we go different ways? — thou followest
Thy path, I mine; — but all go westering,
And all will meet among the Hills of God!

Thy face sails with me on a darker path,
 And smiles me onward! For a time, farewell;
 Wear in thy breast a few of these poor flowers,
 And let their scent remind my Friend of me!

Flowers of a grave, —yet deathless! Be my love
 For thee as deathless! I am beckoned on; —
 But meantime, these, with all the love and blessing
 That prayers can gain of God, I give to thee!

THE SHADOW.

FROM BOOK II: 'THE MAN AND THE SHADOW.'

.
 O PERISHABLE Brother, what a World!
 How wondrous and how fair! Look! look! and think!
 What magic mixed the tints of yonder west,
 Wherein, upon a cushion soft as moss,
 A heaven pink-tinted like a maiden's flesh,
 The dim Star of the Ocean lieth cool
 In palpitating silver, while beneath
 Her image, putting luminous feelers forth,
 Bathes liquid, like a living thing o' the Sea.
 What magic? What Magician? O my Brother,
 What strange Magician, mixing up those tints,
 Pouring the water down, and sending forth
 The crystal air like breath, snowing the heavens
 With luminous jewels of the day and night,
 Looked down, and saw thee lie a lifeless clod,
 And lifted thee, and moulded thee to shape,
 Colored thee with the sunlight till thy blood
 Ran ruby, poured the chemic tints o' the air
 Through eyes that kindled into azure, stole
 The flesh-tints of the lily and the rose

To make thee wondrous fair unto thyself,
 Knitted thy limbs with ruby bands, and blew
 Into thy hollow heart until it stirred, —
 Then to the inner chamber of his Heaven
 Withdrawing, left in midst of such a world
 The living apparition of a Man, —
 A mystery amid the mysteries, —
 A lonely Semblance, with a wild appeal
 To which no form that lives, however dear,
 Hath given a tearless answer, — a Shape, a Soul,
 Projecting ever as it ageth on
 A SHADE which is a silence and a sleep.

.

I saw a Hind at sunrise — dumb he stood,
 And saw the Dawn press with her rosy feet
 The dewy sweetness from the fields of hay,
 Felt the World brighten — leaves and flowers and grass
 Grow luminous — yet beside the pool he stood,
 Wherein, in the gray vapor of the marsh,
 His mottled oxen stood with large blank eyes
 And steaming nostrils : and his eyes like theirs
 Were empty, and he hummed a surly song
 Out of a hollow heart akin to beast's :
 Yea, sun nor star had little joy for him,
 Nor tree nor flower, — to him the world was all
 Mere matter for a ploughshare. On the hill
 Above him, with loose jerkin backward blown
 By winds of morning, and his white brow bare
 Like marble, stood a singer — one of those
 Who write in heart's-blood what is blotted out
 With ox-gall ; and his Soul was in his eyes
 To see the coming of the beautiful Day,
 His lips hung heavy with beauty, and he looked
 Down on the surly clod among the kine,
 And sent his Soul unto him through his eyes,

Transfiguring him with beauty and with praise
 Into the common pathos. Of such stuffs
 Is mankind shapen, both, like thee and me,
 Wear westward, to the melancholy Realm
 Where all the gathered Shades of all the world
 Lie as a cloud around the feet of God.

This darkens all my seeking. O my friend !
 If the whole world had royal eyes like thine,
 I were much holpen ; but to look upon
 Eyes like the ox-herd's, blank as very beast's,
 Shoots sorrow to the very roots of life.
 Aye ! there were hope indeed if each Man seemed
 A Spirit's habitation, — but the world
 Is curst with these blank faces, still as stone,
 And darkening inward. Have these dumb things Souls ?
 If they be tenantless, dare thou and I
 Christen by so sublime a name the Wind
 Bred in the wasting body ?

Yestermorn,

In yonder city that afar away
 Staineth the peaceful blue with its foul breath,
 I passed into a dimly-lighted hall,
 And heard a lanthorn-jawed Philosopher
 Clawing his straw-like bunch of yellow hair,
 With skeletonian periods and a voice
 Shrill as the grating of two bones, 'O Soul,'
 Quoth he, 'O beauteousness we name the Soul,
 Thou art the Flower of all the life o' the World,
 And not in every clod of flesh shoots forth
 The perfect apparition of thy tints
 Immortal ! Flower and scented bloom of things,
 Thou growest on no dunghill in the sun !'
 A flower, a flower immortal ? How I laughed !
 Clip me the lily from its secret roots,
 And farewell all the wonder of the flower !

.

THE DREAM OF THE WORLD WITHOUT DEATH.

FROM BOOK III. ; 'SONGS OF CORRUPTION.'

Now, sitting by her side, worn out with weeping,
Behold, I fell to sleep, and had a vision,
Wherein I heard a wondrous Voice intoning :

Crying aloud, 'The Master on His throne
Openeth now the seventh seal of wonder,
And beckoneth back the angel men name Death.'

And at His feet the mighty Angel kneeleth,
Breathing not ; and the Lord doth look upon him,
Saying, 'Thy wanderings on earth are ended.'

And lo ! the mighty Shadow sitteth idle
Even at the silver gates of heaven,
Drowsily looking in on quiet waters,
And puts his silence among men no longer.

.

The world was very quiet. Men in traffic
Cast looks over their shoulders ; pallid seamen
Shivered to walk upon the decks alone ;

And women barred their doors with bars of iron,
In the silence of the night ; and at the sunrise
Trembled behind the husbandman afield.

I could not see a kirkyard near or far ;
I thirsted for a green grave, and my vision
Was weary for the white gleam of a tombstone.

But hearkening dumbly, ever and anon
I heard a cry out of a human dwelling,
And felt the cold wind of a lost one's going.

One struck a brother fiercely, and he fell,
And faded in a darkness ; and that other
Tore his hair, and was afraid, and could not perish.

One struck his agèd mother on the mouth,
And she vanished with a gray grief from his hearth-stone.
One melted from her bairn, and on the ground

With sweet unconscious eyes the bairn lay smiling.
And many made a weeping among mountains,
And hid themselves in caverns, and were drunken.

I heard a voice from out the beauteous earth,
Whose side rolled up from winter into summer,
Crying, ' I am grievous for my children.'

I heard a voice from out the hoary ocean,
Crying, ' Burial in the breast of me were better,
Yea, burial in the salt flags and green crystals.'

I heard a voice from out the hollow ether,
Saying, ' The thing ye cursed hath been abolished —
Corruption, and decay, and dissolution !'

And the world shrieked, and the summer-time was bitter,
And men and women feared the air behind them,
And for lack of its green graves the world was hateful.

.

Now at the bottom of a snowy mountain
I came upon a woman thin with sorrow,
Whose voice was like the crying of a sea-gull,

Saying, ' O Angel of the Lord, come hither,
And bring me him I seek for on thy bosom,
That I may close his eyelids and embrace him.

' I curse thee that I cannot look upon him !
I curse thee that I know not he is sleeping !
Yet know that he has vanished upon God !

' I laid my little girl upon a wood-bier,
And very sweet she seemed, and near unto me ;
And slipping flowers into her shroud was comfort.

' I put my silver mother in the darkness,
And kissed her, and was solaced by her kisses,
And set a stone, to mark the place, above her.

' And green, green were their quiet sleeping-places,
So green that it was pleasant to remember
That I and my tall man would sleep beside them.

' The closing of dead eyelids is not dreadful,
For comfort comes upon us when we close them,
And tears fall, and our sorrow grows familiar ;

' And we can sit above them where they slumber,
And spin a dreamy pain into a sweetness,
And know indeed that we are very near them.

' But to reach out empty arms is surely dreadful,
And to feel the hollow empty world is awful,
And bitter grow the silence and the distance.

' There is no space for grieving or for weeping ;
No touch, no cold, no agony to strive with,
And nothing but a horror and a blankness !'

.

So far, so far to seek for were the limits
Of affliction ; and men's terror grew a homeless
Terror, yea, and a fatal sense of blankness.

There was no little token of distraction,
There was no visible presence of bereavement,
Such as the mourner easeth out his heart on.

There was no comfort in the slow farewell,
Nor gentle shutting of beloved eyes,
Nor beautiful broodings over sleeping features.

There were no kisses on familiar faces,
 No weaving of white grave-clothes, no last pondering
 Over the still wax cheeks and folded fingers.

There was no putting tokens under pillows,
 There was no dreadful beauty slowly fading,
 Fading like moonlight softly into darkness.

There was no churchyard paths to walk on, thinking
 How near the well-belovèd ones are lying.
 There were no sweet green graves to sit and muse on,

Till grief should grow a summer meditation,
 The shadow of the passing of an angel,
 And sleeping should seem easy, and not cruel,

Nothing but wondrous parting and a blankness.

.

THE HAPPY EARTH.

FROM BOOK V.; 'SONGS OF SEEKING.'

SWEET, sweet it was to sit in leafy Forests,
 In a green darkness, and to hear the stirring
 Of strange breaths hither and thither in the branches ;

And sweet it was to sail on crystal Waters,
 Between the dome above and the dome under,
 The Hills above me and the Hills beneath me ;

And sweet it was to watch the wondrous Lightning
 Spring flashing at the earth, and slowly perish
 Under the falling of the summer Rain.

I loved all grand and gentle and strange things, —
 The wind-flower at the tree-root, and the white cloud,
 The strength of Mountains, and the power of Waters.

And unto me all seasons uttered pleasure :
 Spring, standing startled, listening to the skylark,
 The wild flowers from her lap unheeded falling ;

And Summer, in her gorgeous loose apparel ;
 And Autumn, with her dreamy drooping lashes ;
 And Winter, with his white hair blown about him.

Yea, everywhere there stirred a deathless beauty,
 A gleaming and a flashing into change,
 An under-stream of sober consecration.

Yet nought endured, but all the glory faded,
 And power and joy and sorrow were interwoven ;
 There was no single presence of the Spirit.

THE VISION OF THE MAN ACCURST.

BOOK VIII.

How in the end the Judgment dread
 Shall by the Lord thy God be said, —
 While brightly in a City of Rest
 Shall flash the fountains of the Blest,
 And gladdening around the Throne
 All mortal men shall smile, — save one —
 Children of Earth, hear, last and first,
 The Vision of the Man Accurst.

JUDGMENT was over ; all the world redeemed
 Save one Man, — who had sinned all sins, whose soul
 Was blackness and foul odor. Last of all,
 When all was lamb-white, thro' the summer Sea
 Of ministering Spirits he was drifted
 On to the white sands ; there he lay and writhed,
 Worm-like, black, venomous, with eyes accurst
 Looking defiance, dazzled by the light
 That gleamed upon his clenched and blood-stained hands ;

While with a voice low as a funeral bell,
 The Seraph, sickening, read the sable scroll,
 And as he read the Spirits ministrant
 Darkened and murmured, 'Cast him forth, O Lord !'
 And, from the Shrine where unbeheld He broods,
 The Lord said, 'Tis the basest mortal born —
 Cast him beyond the Gate !'

The wild thing laughed

Defiant, as from wave to wave of light
 He drifted, till he swept beyond the Gate,
 Past the pale Seraph with the silvern eyes ;
 And there the wild Wind, that for ever beats
 About the edge of brightness, caught him up,
 And, like a straw, whirled round and lifted him,
 And, on a dark shore in the Underworld
 Cast him, alone and shivering ; for the Clime
 Was sunless, and the ice was like a sheet
 Of glistening tin, and the faint glimmering peaks
 Were twisted to fantastic forms of frost,
 And everywhere the frozen moonlight steamed
 Foggy and blue, save where the abysses loomed
 Sepulchral shadow. But the Man arose,
 With teeth gnashed beast-like, waved wild feeble hands
 At the white Gate (that glimmered far away,
 Like to the round ball of the Sun beheld
 Through interstices in a wood of pine),
 Cast a shrill curse at the pale judge within
 Then groaning, beast-like crouched.

Like golden waves

That break on a green island of the south,
 Amid the flash of many plumaged wings,
 Passed the fair days in Heaven. By the side
 Of quiet waters perfect Spirits walked,
 Low singing, in the star-dew, full of joy
 In their own thoughts and pictures of those thoughts

Flashed into eyes that loved them ; while beside them,
After exceeding storm, the Waters of Life
With soft sea-sound subsided. Then God said,
‘’T is finished — all is well !’ But as He spake
A voice, from out the lonely Deep beneath,
Mocked !

Then to the Seraph at the Gate,
Who looketh on the Deep with steadfast eyes
For ever, God cried, ‘What is he that mocks ?’
The Seraph answered, ‘’T is the Man accurst !’
And, with a voice of most exceeding peace,
God asked, ‘What doth the Man ?’

The Seraph said :
‘Upon a desolate peak, with hoar-frost hung,
Amid the steaming vapors of the Moon,
He sitteth on a throne, and hideously
Playeth at Judgment ; at his feet, with eyes
Slimy and luminous, squats a monstrous Toad ;
Above his head pale phantoms of the Stars
Fulfil cold ministrations of the Void,
And in their dim and melancholy lustre
His shadow, and the shadow of the Toad
Beneath him, linger. Sceptred, throned, and crowned,
The foul judgeth the foul, and sitting grim,
Laughs !’

With a voice of most exceeding peace
The Lord said, ‘Look no more !’

The Waters of Life
Broke with a gentle sea-sound gladdening —
God turned and blest them ; as He blest the same,
A voice, from out the lonely Void beneath,
Shrieked !

Then to the Seraph at the Gate,
Who looketh on the Deep with steadfast eyes

For ever, God cried, 'What is he that shrieks ?
 The Seraph answered, 'T is the Man accurst !'
 And, with a voice of most exceeding peace,
 God asked, 'What doth the Man ?'

The Seraph said :

· Around him the wild phantasms of the fog
 Moan in the rheumy hoar-frost and cold steam.
 Long time, crowned, sceptred, on his throne he sits
 Playing at Judgment ; then with a shrill voice cries —
 " 'T is finished, thou art judged ! " and, fiercely laughing
 He thrusteth down an iron heel to crush
 The foul Toad, that with dim and luminous eyes
 So stareth at his Soul. Thrice doth he lift
 His foot up fiercely — lo ! he shrinks and cowers —
 Then, with a wild glare at the far-off Gate,
 Rushes away, and, rushing thro' the dark,
 Shrieks !'

With a voice of most exceeding peace
 The Lord said, ' Look no more !'

The Waters of Life,

The living, spiritual Waters, broke,
 Fountain-like, up against the Master's Breast,
 Giving and taking blessing. Overhead
 Gathered the shining legions of the Stars,
 Led by the ethereal Moon, with dewy eyes
 Of lustre : these have been baptized in fire,
 Their raiment is of molten diamond,
 And 't is their office, as they circling move
 In their blue orbits, evermore to turn
 Their faces heavenward, drinking peace and strength
 From that great Flame which, in the core of Heaven,
 Like to the white heart of a violet burns
 Diffusing rays and odor. Blessing all,
 God sought their beauteous orbits, and behold !
 The eyes innumeraibly glistening

Were turned away from Heaven, and with sick stare,
Like the blue gleam of salt dissolved in fire,
They searched the Void, as human faces look
On horror.

To the Seraph at the Gate,
Who looketh on the Deep with steadfast eyes,
God cried, 'What is this thing whereon they gaze?'
The Seraph answered, 'On the Man accurst.'
And, with a voice of most exceeding peace,
God asked, 'What doth the Man?'

The Seraph said:
'O Master! send Thou forth a tongue of fire
To wither up this worm! Serene and cold,
Flooded with moon-dew, lies the World, and there
The Man roams; and the image of the Man
In the wan waters of the frosty sphere
Falleth gigantic. Up and down he drifts,
Worm-like, black, venomous, with eyes accursed,
Waving his bloody hands in fierce appeal,
So that the gracious faces of Thy Stars
Are troubled, and the stainless tides of light
Shadow pollution. With wild, ape-like eyes,
The wild thing whining peers thro' horrent hair,
And rusheth up and down, seeking to find
A face to look upon, a hand to touch,
A heart that beats; but all the World is void
And beauteous. All alone in the Cold Clime,
Alone within the lonely universe,
Crawleth the Man accurst!'

Then said the Lord,
'Doth he repent?' And the fair Seraph said,
'Nay he blasphemeth! Send Thou forth Thy fire!'
But with a voice of most exceeding peace,
Out of the Shrine where unhehld He broods,

God said, 'What I have made, a living Soul,
 Cannot be unmade, but endures for ever.'
 Then added, 'Call the Man!'

The Seraph heard,
 And in a low voice named the lost one's name ;
 The wild Wind that for ever beats the Gate
 Caught up the word, and fled thro' the cold Void.
 'T was murmured on, as a lorn echo fading,
 From peak to peak. Swift as a wolf the Man
 Was rushing o'er a waste, with shadow streaming
 Backward against a frosty gleaming wind,
 When like a fearful whisper in his ear
 'T was wafted ; then his blanched lips shook like leaves
 In that chill wind, his hair was lifted up,
 He paused, his shadow paused, like stone and shadow,
 And shivering, glaring round him, the Man moaned,
 'Who calls?' and in a moment he was 'ware
 Of the white light streaming from the far Gate,
 And looming, blotted black against the light,
 The Seraph with uplifted forefinger,
 Naming his name !

And ere the Man could fly,
 The wild Wind in its circuit swept upon him,
 And, like a straw, whirled him, and lifted him,
 And cast him at the Gate, — a bloody thing —
 Mad, moaning, horrible, obscene, unclean ;
 A body swollen and stained like the wool
 Of sheep that in the rainy season crawl
 About the hills, and sleep on foul damp beds
 Of bracken rusting red. There, breathing hard,
 Glaring with fiery eyes, panted the Man,
 With scorched lips drooping, thirsting as he heard
 The flowing of the Fountains far within.
 Then said the Lord, 'Is the Man there?' and 'Yea,'
 Answered the Seraph pale. Then said the Lord,

‘What doth the Man?’ The Seraph, frowning, said:
‘O Master, in the belly of him is fire,
He thirsteth, fiercely thrusting out his hands,
And threateneth, seeking water!’ Then the Lord
Said, ‘Give him water — let him drink!’

The Seraph,

Stooping above him, with forefinger bright
Touched the gold kerbstone of the Gate, and lo!
Water gushed forth and gleamed; and lying prone
The Man crawled thither, dipt his fevered face,
Drank long and deeply; then, his thirst appeased,
Thrust in his bloody hands unto the wrist,
And let the gleaming Fountain play upon them,
And looking up out of his dripping hair,
Grinned mockery at the giver.

Then the Lord

Said low, ‘How doth the Man?’ The Seraph said:
‘It is a Snake! He mocketh all Thy gifts,
And, in a snake’s voice half-articulate,
Blasphemeth!’ Then the Lord: ‘Doth the Man crave
To enter in?’ ‘Not so,’ the Seraph said,
‘He saith——’ ‘What saith he?’ ‘That his Soul is filled
With hate of Thee and of Thy ways; he loathes
Pure pathways where the fruitage of the Stars
Hangeth resplendent, and he spitteth hate
On all Thy Children. Send Thou forth Thy fire!
In no wise is he better than the beasts,
The gentle beasts, that come like morning dew
And vanish. Let him die!’ Then said the Lord:
‘What I have made endures; but ’t is not meet
This thing should cross my perfect work for ever.
Let him begone!’ Then cried the Seraph pale:
‘O Master! at the frozen Clime he glares
In awe, shrieking at Thee!’ ‘What doth he crave?’
‘Neither Thy Heaven nor by Thy holy ways.’

He murmureth out he is content to dwell
 In the Cold Clime for ever, so Thou sendest
 A face to look upon, a heart that beats,
 A hand to touch — albeit like himself,
 Black, venomous, unblest, exiled, and base :
 Give him this thing, he will be very still,
 Nor trouble Thee again.'

The Lord mused.

Still,

Scarce audible trembled the Waters of Life —
 Over all Heaven the Snow of the same Thought
 Which rose within the Spirit of the Lord
 Fell hushedly ; the innumerable Eyes
 Swam in a lustrous dream.

Then said the Lord :

' In all the waste of worlds there dwelleth not
 Another like himself — behold he is
 The basest Mortal born. Yet 't is not meet
 His cruel cry, for ever piteous,
 Should trouble my eternal Sabbath-day.
 Is there a Spirit here, a human thing,
 Will pass this day from the Gate Beautiful
 To share the exile of this Man accurst, —
 That he may cease the shrill pain of his cry,
 And I have peace ?'

Hushedly, hushedly,
 Snowed down the Thought Divine — the living Waters
 Murmured and darkened. But like mournful mist
 That hovers o'er an autumn pool, two Shapes,
 Beautiful, human, glided to the Gate
 And waited.

' What art thou ? ' in a stern voice
 The Seraph said, with dreadful forefinger

Pointing to one. A gentle voice replied,
‘I will go forth with him whom ye call curst !
He grew within my womb — my milk was white
Upon his lips. I will go forth with him !’
‘And *thou* ?’ the Seraph said. The second Shape
Answered, ‘I also will go forth with him ;
I have kist his lips, I have lain upon his breast,
I bare him children, and I closed his eyes ;
I will go forth with him !’

Then said the Lord,
‘What Shapes are these who speak ?’ The Seraph answered :

‘The woman who bore him and the wife he wed —
The one he slew in anger — the other he stript,
With ravenous claws, of raiment and of food.’
Then said the Lord, ‘Doth the Man hear ?’ ‘He hears,’
Answered the Seraph ; ‘like a wolf he lies,
Venomous, bloody, dark, a thing accurst,
And hearkeneth, with no sign !’ Then said the Lord :
‘Show them the Man,’ and the pale Seraph cried,
‘Behold !’

Hushedly, hushedly, hushedly,
In heaven fell the Snow of Thought Divine,
Gleaming upon the Waters of Life beneath
And melting, — as with slow and lingering pace,
The Shapes stole forth into the windy cold,
And saw the thing that lay and throbbed and lived,
And stooped above him. Then one reached a hand
And touched him, and the fierce thing shrank and spat,
Hiding his face.

‘Have they beheld the Man ?’
The Lord said ; and the Seraph answered, ‘Yea ;’
And the Lord said again, ‘What doth the Man ?’
‘He lieth like a log in the wild blast,

And as he lieth, lo ! one sitting takes
 His head into her lap, and moans his name,
 And smooths his matted hair from off his brow,
 And croons in a low voice a cradle song ;
 And lo ! the other kneeleth at his side,
 Half-shrinking in the old habit of her fear,
 Yet hungering with her eyes, and passionately
 Kissing his bloody hands.'

Then said the Lord,
 ' Will they go forth with him ? ' A voice replied,
 ' He grew within my womb -- my milk was white
 Upon his lips. I will go forth with him ! '
 And a voice cried, ' I will go forth with him ;
 I have kist his lips, I have lain upon his breast,
 I bore him children, and I closed his eyes ;
 I will go forth with him ! '

Still hushedly
 Snowed down the Thought Divine, the Waters of Life
 Flowed softly, sadly ; for an alien sound,
 A piteous human cry, a sob forlorn
 Thrilled to the heart of Heaven.

The Man wept.
 And in a voice of most exceeding peace
 The Lord said (while against the Breast Divine
 The Waters of Life leapt, gleaming, gladdening) :
 ' The Man is saved ; let the Man enter in ! '

FROM THE 'CORUISKEN SONNETS.' 4

II.

WE ARE FATHERLESS.

I FOUND Thee not by the starved widow's bed,
 Nor in the sick-rooms where my dear ones died ;
 In Cities vast I hearkened for Thy tread,

And heard a thousand call Thee, wretched-eyed,
Worn out, and bitter. But the Heavens denied
Their melancholy Maker. From the Dead
Assurance came, nor answer. Then I fled
Into these wastes, and raised my hands, and cried :
'The seasons pass — the sky is as a pall —
Thin wasted hands on withering hearts we press —
There is no God — in vain we plead and call,
In vain with weary eyes we search and guess —
Like children in an empty house sit all,
Cast-away children, lorn and fatherless.'

VI.

LORD, ART THOU HERE ?

LORD, art Thou here ? far from the citted zones,
Brooding in melancholy solitude ;
Hushing Thy breath to awful undertones,
Darkening Thy face, if mortal foot intrude.
Father, how shall I meet Thee in this mood ?
How shall I ask Thee why Thou dwell'st with stones,
While far away the world, like Lazarus, groans,
Sick for Thy healing. Father, if Thou be'st good,
And wise, and gentle, oh come down, come down !
Come like an Angel with a human face,
Pass through the gates into the hungry Town,
Comfort the weary, send the afflicted grace,
Shine brighter on the graves where we lay down
Our dear ones, cheer them in the narrow place !

XXXIV.

QUIET WATERS.

O RAINBOW, Rainbow, on the livid height
 Softening its ashen outlines into dream,
 Dewy yet brilliant, delicately bright
 As pink wild-roses' leaves, why dost thou gleam
 So beckoningly? Whom dost thou invite
 Still higher upward on the bitter quest?
 What dost thou promise to the weary sight
 In that strange region whence thou issuest?
 Speakest thou of pensive runlets by whose side
 Our dear ones wander sweet and gentle-eyed,
 In the soft dawn of some diviner Day?
 Art thou a promise? Come those hues and dyes
 From heavenly Meads, near which thou dost arise,
 Irised from Quiet Waters, far away!

THE BALLAD OF JUDAS ISCARIOT.

'T WAS the body of Judas Iscariot
 Lay in the Field of Blood;
 'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
 Beside the body stood.

Black was the earth by night,
 And black was the sky;
 Black, black were the broken clouds,
 Tho' the red moon went by.

'T was the body of Judas Iscariot
 Strangled and dead lay there;
 'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
 Looked on it in despair.

The breath of the World came and went
Like a sick man's in rest;
Drop by drop on the World's eyes
The dews fell cool and blest.

Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did make a gentle moan —
'I will bury underneath the ground
My flesh and blood and bone.

'I will bury deep beneath the soil,
Lest mortals look thereon,
And when the wolf and raven come
The body will be gone!

'The stones of the field are sharp as steel,
And hard and cold, God wot;
And I must bear my body hence
Until I find a spot!'

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot,
So grim, and gaunt, and gray,
Raised the body of Judas Iscariot,
And carried it away.

And as he bare it from the field
Its touch was cold as ice,
And the ivory teeth within the jaw
Rattled aloud, like dice.

As the soul of Judas Iscariot
Carried its load with pain,
The Eye of Heaven, like a lanthorn's eye,
Opened and shut again.

Half he walked, and half he seemed
Lifted on the cold wind;
He did not turn, for chilly hands
Were pushing from behind.

The first place that he came unto
It was the open wold,
And underneath were prickly whins,
And a wind that blew so cold.

The next place that he came unto
It was a stagnant pool,
And when he threw the body in
It floated light as wool.

He drew the body on his back,
And it was dripping chill,
And the next place he came unto
Was a Cross upon a hill :

A Cross upon the windy hill,
And a Cross on either side,
Three skeletons that swing thereon,
Who had been crucified.

And on the middle cross-bar sat
A white dove slumbering ;
Dim it sat in the dim light,
With its head beneath its wing.

And underneath the middle Cross
A grave yawned wide and vast,
But the soul of Judas Iscariot
Shivered, and glided past.

The fourth place that he came unto
It was the Brig of Dread,
And the great torrents rushing down
Were deep, and swift, and red.

He dared not fling the body in
For fear of faces dim,
And arms were waved in the wild water
To thrust it back to him.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Turned from the Brig of Dread,
And the dreadful foam of the wild water
Had splashed the body red.

For days and nights he wandered on
Upon an open plain,
And the days went by like blinding mist,
And the nights like rushing rain.

For days and nights he wandered on,
All thro' the Wood of Woe;
And the nights went by like moaning wind,
And the days like drifting snow.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Came with a weary face —
Alone, alone, and all alone,
Alone in a lonely place!

He wandered east, he wandered west,
And heard no human sound;
For months and years, in grief and tears,
He wandered round and round.

For months and years, in grief and tears,
He walked the silent night;
Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Perceived a far-off light.

A far-off light across the waste,
As dim as dim might be,
That came and went, like the lighthouse gleam
On a black night at sea.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Crawled to the distant gleam;
And the rain came down, and the rain was blown
Against him with a scream.

For days and nights he wandered on,
 Pushed on by hands behind;
 And the days went by like black, black rain,
 And the nights like rushing wind.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot,
 Strange, and sad, and tall,
 Stood all alone at dead of night
 Before a lighted hall.

And the wold was white with snow,
 And his foot-marks black and damp,
 And the ghost of the silvern Moon arose,
 Holding her yellow lamp.

And the icicles were on the eaves,
 And the walls were deep with white,
 And the shadows of the guests within
 Passed on the window light.

The shadows of the wedding guests
 Did strangely come and go,
 And the body of Judas Iscariot
 Lay stretched along the snow.

The body of Judas Iscariot
 Lay stretched along the snow;
 'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
 Ran swiftly to and fro.

To and fro, and up and down,
 He ran so swiftly there,
 As round and round the frozen Pole
 Glideth the lean white bear.

'T was the Bridegroom sat at the table-head,
 And the lights burnt bright and clear —
 'O, who is that,' the Bridegroom said,
 'Whose weary feet I hear?'

'T was one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered soft and slow,
'It is a wolf runs up and down
With a black track in the snow.'

The Bridegroom in his robe of white
Sat at the table-head —
'O, who is that who moans without?'
The blessed Bridegroom said.

'T was one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered fierce and low,
'T is the soul of Judas Iscariot
Gliding to and fro.'

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did hush itself and stand,
And saw the Bridegroom at the door
With a light in his hand.

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he was clad in white,
And far within the Lord's Supper
Was spread so broad and bright.

The Bridegroom shaded his eyes and looked,
And his face was bright to see —
'What dost thou here at the Lord's Supper
With thy body's sins?' said he.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stood black, and sad, and bare —
'I have wandered many nights and days;
There is no light elsewhere.'

'T was the wedding guests cried out within,
And their eyes were fierce and bright —
'Scourge the soul of Judas Iscariot
Away into the night!'

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he waved hands still and slow,
And the third time that he waved his hands
The air was thick with snow.

And of every flake of falling snow,
Before it touched the ground,
There came a dove, and a thousand doves
Made sweet sound.

'T was the body of Judas Iscariot
Floated away full fleet,
And the wings of the doves that bare it off
Were like its winding-sheet.

'T was the Bridegroom stood at the open door,
And beckoned, smiling sweet;
'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stole in, and fell at his feet.

'The Holy Supper is spread within,
And the many candles shine,
And I have waited long for thee
Before I poured the wine!'

The supper wine is poured at last,
The lights burn bright and fair,
Iscariot washes the Bridegroom's feet,
And dries them with his hair.

LEWIS MORRIS.

FROM 'THE EPIC OF HADES.'⁶*CLYTÆMNESTRA.*

FROM BOOK I., 'TARTARUS.'

THEN it was again
A woman whom I saw, pitiless, stern,
Bearing the brand of blood — a lithe dark form,
And cruel eyes which glared beneath the gems
Which argued her a Queen, and on her side
An ancient stain of gore, which did befoul
Her royal robe. A murderess in thought
And dreadful act, who took within the toils
Her kingly Lord, and slew him of old time
After burnt Troy. I had no time to speak
When she shrieked thus :
 ' It doth repent me not
I would 't were yet to do, and I would do it
Again a thousand times, if the shed blood
Might for one hour restore to me the kisses
Of my Ægisthus. Oh, he was divine,
My hero, with the godlike locks and eyes
Of Eros' self ! What boots it that they prate
Of wifely duty, love of spouse or child,
Honor or pity, when the swift fire takes
A woman's heart, and burns it out, and leaps
With fierce forked tongue around it, till it lies

In ashes, a dead heart, nor aught remains
Of old affections, naught but the new flame
Which is unquenched desire?

It did not come,
My blessing, all at once, but the slow fruit
Of solitude and midnight loneliness,
And weary waiting for the tardy news
Of taken Troy. Long years I sate alone,
Widowed, within my palace, while my Lord
Was over seas, waging the accursed war,
First of the file of Kings. Year after year
Came false report, or harder, no report
Of the great fleet. The summers waxed and waned,
The wintry surges smote the sounding shores,
And yet there came no end of it. They brought
Now hopeless failure, now great victories ;
And all alike were false, all but delay
And hope deferred, which cometh not, but breaks
The heart which suffering wrings not.

So I bore
Long time the solitary years, and sought
To solace the dull days with motherly cares
For those my Lord had left me. My firstborn,
Iphigeneia, sailed at first with him
Upon that fatal voyage, but the young
Orestes and Electra stayed with me —
Not dear as she was, for the firstborn takes
The mother's heart, and, with the milk it draws
From the mother's virgin breast, drains all the love
It bore, ay, even tho' the sire be dear ;
Much more, then, when he is a King indeed,
Mighty in war and council, but too high
To stoop to a woman's love. But she was gone,
Nor heard I tidings of her, knowing not
If yet she walked the earth, nor if she bare
The load of children, even as I had borne

Her in my opening girlhood, when I leapt
From child to Queen, but never loved the King.

Thus the slow years rolled onward, till at last
There came a dreadful rumor — ‘She is dead,
Thy daughter, years ago. The cruel priests
Clamored for blood; the stern cold Kings stood round
Without a tear, and he, her sire, with them,
To see a virgin bleed. They cut with knives
The taper girlish throat; they watched the blood
Drip slowly on the sand, and the young life
Meek as a lamb come to the sacrifice
To appease the angry gods.’ And he, the King,
Her father, stood by too, and saw them do it,
The wickedness, breathing no word of wrath,
Till all was done! The cowards! the dull cowards!
I would some black storm, bursting suddenly,
Had whelmed them and their fleets, ere yet they dared
To waste an innocent life!

I had gone mad,
I know it, but for him, my love, my dear,
My fair sweet love. He came to comfort me
With words of friendship, holding that my Lord
Was bound, perhaps, to let her die — ‘The gods
Were oftentimes hard to appease — or was it indeed
The priests who asked it? Were there any gods?
Or only phantoms, creatures of the brain,
Born of the fears of men, the greed of priests,
Useful to govern women? Had he been
Lord of the fleet, not all the soothsayers
Who ever frightened cowards should have brought
His soul to such black depths.’ I hearkening to him
As ’t were my own thought grown articulate,
Found my grief turn to hate, and hate to love —
Hate of my Lord, love of the voice which spoke
Such dear and comfortable words. And thus,

Love to a storm of passion growing, swept
 My wounded soul and dried my tears, as dries
 The hot sirocco all the bitter pools
 Of salt among the sand. I never knew
 True love before ; I was a child, no more,
 When the King cast his eyes on me. What is it
 To have borne the weight of offspring 'neath the zone,
 If Love be not their sire ; or live long years
 Of commerce, not of love ? Better a day
 Of Passion than the long unlovely years
 Of wifely duty, when Love cometh not
 To wake the barren days !

And yet at first
 I hesitated long, nor would embrace
 The blessing that was mine. We are hedged round,
 We women, by such close-drawn ordinances,
 Set round us by our tyrants, that we fear
 To overstep a hand's breadth the dull bounds
 Of custom ; but at last Love, waking in me,
 Burst all my chains asunder, and I lived
 For naught but Love.

My son, the young Orestes,
 I sent far off ; my girl Electra only
 Remained, too young to doubt me, and I knew
 At last what was to live.

So the swift years
 Fleeted and found me happy, till the dark
 Ill-omened day when Rumor, thousand-tongued,
 Whispered of taken Troy ; and from my dream
 Of happiness, sudden I woke, and knew
 The coming retribution. We had grown
 Too loving for concealment, and our tale
 Of mutual love was bruited far and wide
 Through Argos. All the gossips bruited it,
 And were all tongue to tell it to the King
 When he should come. And should the cold proud Lord

I never loved, the murderer of my girl,
Come 'twixt my love and me? A swift resolve
Flashed through me on pondering it: Love for Love
And Blood for Blood—the simple golden rule
Taught by the elder gods.

When I had taken
My fixed resolve, I grew impatient for it,
Counting the laggard days. Oh, it was sweet
To simulate the yearning of a wife
Long parted from her Lord, and mock the fools
Who dogged each look and word, and but for fear
Had torn me from my throne—the pies, the jays,
The impotent chatterers, who thought by words
To stay me in the act! 'T was sweet to mock them
And read distrust within their eyes, when I,
Knowing my purpose, bade them quick prepare
All fitting honors for the King, and knew
They dared not disobey—oh, 't was enough
To wing the slow-paced hours.

But when at last
I saw his sails upon the verge, and then
The sea-worn ship, and marked his face grown old,
The body a little bent, which was so straight,
The thin gray hairs which were the raven locks
Of manhood when he went, I felt a moment
I could not do the deed. But when I saw
The beautiful sad woman come with him,
The future in her eyes, and her sad voice
Proclaim the tale of doom, two thoughts at once
Assailed me, bidding me despatch with a blow
Him and his mistress, making sure the will
Of fate, and my revenge.

Oh, it was strange
To see all happen as we planned; as 't were
Some drama oft rehearsed, wherein each step,
Each word, is so prepared, the poorest player

Knows his turn come to do — the solemn landing —
 The ride to the palace gate — the courtesies
 Of welcome — the mute crowds without — the bath
 Prepared within — the precious circling folds
 Of tissue stretched around him, shutting out
 The gaze, and folding helpless like a net
 The mighty limbs — the battle-axe laid down
 Against the wall, and I, his wife and Queen,
 Alone with him, waiting and watching still,
 Till the woman shrieked without. Then with swift step
 I seized the axe, and struck him as he lay
 Helpless, once, twice, and thrice — once for my girl,
 Once for my love, once for the woman, and all
 For Fate and my Revenge !

He gave a groan,
 Once only, as I thought he might ; and then
 No sound but the quick gurgling of the blood,
 As it flowed from him in streams, and turned the pure
 And limpid water of the bath to red —
 I had not looked for that — it flowed and flowed,
 And seemed to madden me to look on it,
 Until my love with hands bloody as mine,
 But with the woman's blood, rushed in, and eyes
 Rounded with horror ; and we turned to go,
 And left the dead alone.

But happiness
 Still mocked me, and a doubt unknown before
 Came on me, and amid the silken shows
 And luxury of power I seemed to see
 Another answer to my riddle of life
 Than that I gave myself, and it was "murder ;"
 And in my people's sullen mien and eyes,
 "Murder ;" and in the mirror, when I looked,
 "Murder" glared out, and terror lest my son
 Returning, grown to manhood, should avenge
 His father's blood. For somehow, as 't would seem,

The gods, if gods there be, or the stern Fate
Which doth direct our little lives, do filch
Our happiness — though bright with Love's own ray,
There comes a cloud which veils it. Yet, indeed,
My days were happy. I repent me not;
I would wade through seas of blood to know again
Those fierce delights once more.

But my young girl
Electra, grown to woman, turned from me
Her modest maiden eyes, nor loved to set
Her kiss upon my cheek, but, all distraught
With secret care, hid her from all the pomps
And revelries which did befit her youth,
Walking alone; and often at the tomb
Of her lost sire they found her, pouring out
Libations to the dead. And evermore
I did bethink me of my son Orestes,
Who now should be a man; and yearned sometimes
To see his face, yet feared lest from his eyes
His father's soul should smite me.

So I lived
Happy and yet unquiet — a stern voice
Speaking of doom, which long time softer notes
Of careless weal, the music which doth spring
From the fair harmonies of life and love,
Would drown in their own concord. This at times,
Nay, day by day, stronger and dreadfuller,
With dominant accent, marred the sounds of joy
By one prevailing discord. So at length
I came to lose the Present in the dread
Of what might come; the penalty that waits
Upon successful sin; who, having sinned,
Had missed my sin's reward.

Until one day
I, looking from my palace casement, saw
A humble suppliant, clad in pilgrim garb,

Approach the marble stair. A sudden throb
 Thrilled thro' me, and the mother's heart went forth
 Thro' all disguise of garb and rank and years,
 Knowing my son. How fair he was, how tall
 And vigorous, my boy! What strong straight limbs
 And noble port! How beautiful the shade
 Of manhood on his lip! I longed to burst
 From my chamber down, yearning to throw myself
 Upon his neck within the palace court,
 Before the guards — spurning my queenly rank,
 All but my motherhood. And then a chill
 Of doubt o'erspread me, knowing what a gulf
 Fate set between our lives, impassable
 As that great gulf which yawns 'twixt life and death
 And 'twixt this Hell and Heaven. I shrank back,
 And turned to think a moment, half in fear,
 And half in pain ; dividing the swift mind,
 Yet all in love.

Then came a cry, a groan,
 From the inner court, the clash of swords, the fall
 Of a body on the pavement ; and one cried,
 "The King is dead, slain by the young Orestes,
 Who cometh hither." With the word, the door
 Flew open, and my son stood straight before me,
 His drawn sword dripping blood. Oh, he was fair
 And terrible to see, when from his limbs,
 The suppliant's mantle fallen, left the mail
 And arms of a young warrior. Love and Hate,
 Which are the offspring of a common sire,
 Strove for the mastery, till within his eyes
 I saw his father's ghost glare unappeased
 From out Love's casements.

Then I knew my fate
 And his — mine to be slain by my son's hand,
 And his to slay me, since the Furies drave
 Our lives to one destruction ; and I took

His point within my breast.

But I praise not
The selfish, careless gods who wrecked our lives,
Making the King the murderer of his girl,
And me his murderess ; making my son
The murderer of his mother and her love —
A mystery of blood ! — I curse them all,
The careless Forces, sitting far withdrawn
Upon the heights of Space, taking men's lives
For playthings, and deriding as in sport
Our happiness and woe — I curse them all.
We have a right to joy ; we have a right,
I say, as they have. Let them stand confessed
The puppets that they are — too weak to give
The good they feign to love, since Fate, too strong
For them as us, beyond their painted sky,
Sits and derides them, too. I curse Fate too,
The deaf blind Fury, taking human souls
And crushing them, as a dull fretful child
Crushes its toys and knows not with what skill
Those feeble forms are feigned.

I curse, I loathe,
I spit on them. It doth repent me not.
I would 't were yet to do. I have lived my life.
I have loved. See, there he lies within the bath,
And thus I smite him ! thus ! Didst hear him groan ?
Oh, vengeance, thou art sweet ! What, living still ?
Ah me ! we cannot die ! Come, torture me,
Ye Furies — for I love not soothing words —
As once ye did my son. Ye miserable
Blind ministers of Hell, I do defy you ;
Not all your torments can undo the Past
Of Passion and of Love !'

Even as she spake
There came a viewless trouble in the air,

Which took her, and a sweep of wings unseen,
 And terrible sounds, which swooped on her and hushed
 Her voice, and seemed to occupy her soul
 With horror and despair ; and as she passed
 I marked her agonized eyes.

MARSYAS.

FROM BOOK II., 'HADES.'

FIRST I saw

A youth who pensive leaned against the trunk
 Of a dark cypress, and an idle flute
 Hung at his side. A sorrowful sad soul,
 Such as sometimes he knows, who meets the gaze,
 Mute, uncomplaining yet most pitiful,
 Of one whom nature, by some secret spite,
 Has maimed and left imperfect ; or the pain
 Which fills a poet's eyes. Beneath his robe
 I seemed to see the scar of cruel stripes,
 Too hastily concealed. Yet was he not
 Wholly unhappy, but from out the core
 Of suffering flowed a secret spring of joy,
 Which mocked the drougths of Fate, and left him glad
 And glorying in his sorrow. As I gazed
 He raised his silent flute, and, half ashamed,
 Blew a soft note ; and as I stayed awhile
 I heard him thus discourse —

‘ The flute is sweet
 To gods and men, but sweeter far the lyre
 And voice of a true singer. Shall I fear
 To tell of that great trial, when I strove
 And Phœbus conquered? Nay, no shame it is
 To bow to an immortal melody ;
 But glory.

Once among the Phrygian hills ;
 I lay a-musing, — while the silly sheep

Wandered among the thyme — upon the bank
Of a clear mountain stream, beneath the pines,
Safe hidden from the noon. A dreamy haze
Played on the uplands, but the hills were clear
In sunlight, and no cloud was on the sky.
It was the time when a deep silence comes
Upon the summer earth, and all the birds
Have ceased from singing, and the world is still
As midnight, and if any live thing move —
Some fur-clad creature, or cool gliding snake —
Within the pipy overgrowth of weeds,
The ear can catch the rustle, and the trees
And earth and air are listening. As I lay,
Faintly, as in a dream, I seemed to hear
A tender music, like the Æolian chords,
Sound low within the woodland, whence the stream,
Flowed full, yet silent. Long, with ear to ground,
I hearkened; and the sweet strain, fuller grown,
Rounder and clearer came, and danced along
In mirthful measure now, and now grown grave
In dying falls, and sweeter and more clear,
Tripping at nuptials and high revelry,
Wailing at burials, rapt in soaring thoughts,
Chanting strange sea-tales full of mystery,
Touching all chords of being, and life and death,
Now rose, now sank, and always was divine,
So strange the music came.

Till, as I lay

Enraptured, swift a sudden discord rang,
And all the sound grew still. A sudden flash,
As from a sunlit jewel, fired the wood.
A noise of water smitten, and on the hills
A fair white fleece of cloud, which swiftly climbed
Into the farthest heaven. Then, as I mused,
Knowing a parting goddess, straight I saw
A sudden splendor float upon the stream,

And knew it for this jewelled flute, which paused
 Before me on an eddy. It I snatched
 Eager, and to my ardent lips I bore
 The wonder, and behold, with the first breath —
 The first warm human breath, the silent strains,
 The half-drowned notes which late the goddess blew,
 Revived, and sounded clearer, sweeter far
 Than mortal skill could make. So with delight
 I left my flocks to wander o'er the wastes
 Untended, and the wolves and eagles seized
 The tender lambs, but I was for my art —
 Nought else ; and though the high-pitched notes divine
 Grew faint, yet something lingered, and at last
 So sweet a note I sounded of my skill,
 That all the Phrygian highlands, all the white
 Hill villages, were fain to hear the strain,
 Which the mad shepherd made.

So, overbold,
 And rapt in my new art, at last I dared
 To challenge Phœbus' self.

'T was a fair day
 When sudden, on the mountain side, I saw
 A train of fleecy clouds in a white band
 Descending. Down the gleaming pinnacles
 And difficult crags they floated, and the arch,
 Drawn with its thousand rays against the sun,
 Hung like a glory o'er them. Midst the pines
 They clothed themselves with form, and straight I knew
 The immortals. Young Apollo, with his lyre,
 Kissed by the sun, and all the Muses clad
 In robes of gleaming white ; then a great fear,
 Yet mixed with joy, assailed me, for I knew
 Myself a mortal equalled with the gods.

Ah me ! how fair they were ! how fair and dread
 In face and form, they showed, when now they came

Upon the thymy slope, and the young god
Lay with his choir around him, beautiful
And bold as Youth and Dawn ! There was no cloud
Upon the sky, nor any sound at all
When I began my strain. No coward fear
Of what might come restrained me ; but an awe
Of those immortal eyes and ears divine
Looking and listening. All the earth seemed full
Of ears for me alone — the woods, the fields,
The hills, the skies were listening. Scarce a sound
My flute might make ; such subtle harmonies
The silence seemed to weave round me and flout
The half unuttered thought. Till last I blew,
As now, a hesitating note, and lo !
The breath divine, lingering on mortal lips,
Hurried my soul along to such fair rhymes,
Sweeter than wont, that swift I knew my life
Rise up within me, and expand, and all
The human, which so nearly is divine,
Was glorified, and on the Muses' lips,
And in their lovely eyes, I saw a fair
Approval, and my soul in me was glad.

For all the strains I blew were strains of love —
Love striving, love triumphant, love that lies
Within beloved arms, and wreathes his locks
With flowers, and lets the world go by and sings
Unheeding ; and I saw a kindly gleam
Within the Muses' eyes, who were indeed,
Women, though god-like.

But upon the face
Of the young Sun-god only haughty scorn
Sate, and he swiftly struck his golden lyre,
And played the Song of Life ; and lo, I knew
My strain, how earthy ! Oh, to hear the young
Apollo playing ! and the hidden cells

And chambers of the universe displayed
 Before the charmed sound! I seemed to float
 In some enchanted cave, where the wave dips
 In from the sunlit sea, and floods its depths
 With reflex hues of heaven. My soul was rapt
 By that I heard, and dared to wish no more
 For victory; and yet because the sound
 Of music that is born of human breath
 Comes straighter from the soul than any strain
 The hand alone can make; therefore I knew,
 With a mixed thrill of pity and delight,
 The nine immortal Sisters hardly touched
 By this fine strain of music, as by mine,
 And when the high lay trembled to its close,
 Still doubting.

Then upon the Sun-god's face
 There passed a cold proud smile. He swept his lyre
 Once more, then laid it down, and with clear voice,
 The voice of godhead, sang. Oh, ecstasy,
 Oh happiness of him who once has heard
 Apollo singing! For his ears the sound
 Of grosser music dies, and all the earth
 Is full of subtle undertones, which change
 The listener and transform him. As he sang —
 Of what I know not, but the music touched
 Each chord of being — I felt my secret life
 Stand open to it, as the parched earth yawns
 To drink the summer rain; and at the call
 Of those refreshing waters, all my thought
 Stir from its dark and secret depths, and burst
 Into sweet, odorous flowers, and from their wells
 Deep call to deep, and all the mystery
 Of all that is, laid open. As he sang,
 I saw the Nine, with lovely pitying eyes,
 Sign "He has conquered." Yet I felt no pang
 Of fear, only deep joy that I had heard

Such music while I lived, even though it brought
 Torture and death. For what were it to lie
 Sleek, crowned with roses, drinking vulgar praise,
 And surfeited with offerings, the dull gift
 Of ignorant hands — all which I might have known —
 To this diviner failure? Godlike 't is
 To climb upon the icy ledge, and fall
 Where other footsteps dare not. So I knew
 My fate, and it was near.

For to a pine
 They bound me willing, and with cruel stripes
 Tore me, and took my life.

But from my blood
 Was born the stream of song, and on its flow
 My poor flute, to the cool swift river borne,
 Floated, and thence adown a lordlier tide
 Into the deep, wide sea. I do not blame
 Phœbus, or Nature which has set this bar
 Betwixt success and failure, for I know
 How far high failure overleaps the bound
 Of low successes. Only suffering draws
 The inner heart of song and can elicit
 The perfumes of the soul. 'T were not enough
 To fail, for that were happiness to him
 Who ever upward looks with reverent eye
 And seeks but to admire. So, since the race
 Of bards soars highest; as who seek to show
 Our lives as in a glass; therefore it comes
 That suffering weds with song, from him of old,
 Who solaced his blank darkness with his verse;
 Through all the story of neglect and scorn,
 Necessity, sheer hunger, early death,
 Which smite the singer still. Not only those
 Who hold clear accents of the voice divine
 Are honorable — they are blest, indeed,
 Whate'er the world has held — but those who hear

Some fair faint echoes, though the crowd be deaf,
 And see the white gods' garments on the hills,
 Which the crowd sees not, though they may not find
 Fit music for their visions; they are blest,
 Not pitiable. Not from arrogant pride
 Nor over boldness fail they who have striven
 To tell what they have heard, with voice too weak
 For such high message. More it is than ease,
 Palace and pomp, honors and luxuries,
 To have seen white Presences upon the hills,
 To have heard the voices of the Eternal Gods.'

So spake he, and I seemed to look on him,
 Whose sad young eyes grow on us from the page
 Of his own verse: who did himself to death:
 Or whom the dullard slew: or whom the sea
 Rapt from us: and I passed without a word,
 Slow, grave, with many musings.

FROM 'THE ODE OF LIFE.'⁶

THE ODE OF EVIL.

OH, who shall sing of Life and not of Ill?
 The essence of our will
 Is fullest liberty to stray,
 From out the green and blessed way,
 Amid the desert wastes of drought and death.
 This is the power that makes us free,
 This of our Being is the penalty;
 And maybe the Eternal Will,
 Clothing itself with form to bid Creation be,
 Took to itself some boundary, and awhile,
 Self-limited, made vile
 And subjected to Law the Majesty

Which all the universe of space did fill.
Evil is Life,
The conflict of great laws pervading space;
Evil is strife,
Which keeps the creature in its ordered place.
If any hand divine should e'er withdraw
The fixed coercive potency of Law,
Surely the universe of things would fade
And cease and be unmade.
Where Law is, there is Good,
And freedom to obey or to transgress;
Else 't were no Law, but, weaker far and less,
If one created being might not the thing it would.

Young lives spring up and fade,
Wither and are opprest,
Toil takes the world, and pain,
And all the things that God has made
Travail and groan and fain would be at rest,
And Wrong prevails again.
And we — we lift a hopeless eye
Up to the infinite sky,
Mourning the Ill that is, and shall be yet,
Weak creatures who forget
The very law and root of Life,
That it is sown in pain and nursed in woe and strife.

The evil blight of war
Torments the race from age to age,
And man slays man through all the years that are,
And savage lust and brutal rage
Deform this glorious heritage of earth.
We shudder and grow faint,
Knowing the far fair dreams of seer and saint
Show thin and little worth.
The young life, rising, sinks in sloughs of sense,

And wanders and is lost.
 Alas ! for days of young-eyed innocence.
 Alas ! for the calm hours ere, passion-tost,
 The young soul grew, a white flower sweet and pure.
 Yet this is sure,
 That not in tranquil zones of endless calm
 Springs up the victor's palm,
 But blown by circling storms which blot the sky,
 Nor fitting were it to the eye
 Always to look upon a cloudless sun, —
 Grown blind with too much light before the journey done.

The victories of Right
 Are born of strife.
 There were no Day were there no Night,
 Nor, without dying, Life.
 There only doth Right triumph, where the Wrong
 Is mightiest and most strong ;
 There were no Good, indeed, were there no Ill.
 And when the final victory shall come,
 Burst forth, oh Awful Sun, and draw Creation home !

Not within Time or Space
 Lines drawn in opposite ways grow one,
 But in some Infinite place
 Before the Eternal throne ;
 There, ways to-day divergent, Right and Wrong,
 Approach the nearer that they grow more long.
 There at the Eternal feet,
 Fused, joined, and grown complete,
 The circle rounds itself, the enclosing wall
 Of the Universe sinks down, and God is all in all !

EDWIN ARNOLD.

FROM 'THE LIGHT OF ASIA.'

THE RENUNCIATION.

FROM BOOK IV.

THE purdah hung,
 Crimson and blue, with brodered threads of gold,
 Across a portal carved in sandal-wood,
 Whence by three steps the way was to the bower
 Of inmost splendor, and the marriage-couch
 Set on a dais soft with silver cloths,
 Where the foot fell as though it trod on piles
 Of neem-blooms. All the walls were plates of pearl,
 Cut shapely from the shells of Lanka's wave ;
 And o'er the alabaster roof there ran
 Rich inlayings of lotus and of bird,
 Wrought in skilled work of lazulite and jade,
 Jacynth and jasper ; woven round the dome,
 And down the sides, and all about the frames
 Wherein were set the fretted lattices,
 Through which there breathed, with moonlight and cool airs,
 Scents from the shell-flowers and the jasmine sprays ;
 Not bringing thither grace or tenderness
 Sweeter than shed from those fair presences
 Within the place — the beauteous Sâkya Prince,
 And hers, the stately, bright Yasôdhara.

Half risen from her soft nest at his side,
 The chuddah fallen to her waist, her brow

Laid in both palms, the lovely Princess leaned
 With heaving bosom and fast falling tears.
 Thrice with her lips she touched Siddârtha's hand,
 And at the third kiss moaned, 'Awake, my Lord!
 Give me the comfort of thy speech!' Then he —
 'What is it with thee, O my life?' but still
 She moaned anew before the words would come;
 Then spake, 'Alas, my Prince! I sank to sleep
 Most happy, for the babe I bear of thee
 Quickened this eve, and at my heart there beat
 That double pulse of life and joy and love
 Whose happy music lulled me, but — aho! —
 In slumber I beheld three sights of dread,
 With thought whereof my heart is throbbing yet.
 I saw a white bull with wide branching horns,
 A lord of pastures, pacing through the streets,
 Bearing upon his front a gem which shone
 As if some star had dropped to glitter there,
 Or like the kantha-stone the great snake keeps
 To make bright daylight underneath the earth.
 Slow through the streets toward the gates he paced,
 And none could stay him, though there came a voice
 From Indra's temple, "If ye stay him not,
 The glory of the city goeth forth."
 Yet none could stay him. Then I wept aloud,
 And locked my arms about his neck, and strove,
 And bade them bar the gates; but that ox-king
 Bellowed, and, lightly tossing free his crest,
 Broke from my clasp, and bursting through the bars,
 Trampled the warders down and passed away.
 The next strange dream was this: Four Presences
 Splendid, with shining eyes, so beautiful
 They seemed the Regents of the Earth who dwell
 On Mount Sumeru, lighting from the sky
 With retinue of countless heavenly ones,
 Swift swept unto our city, where I saw

The golden flag of Indra on the gate
Flutter and fall ; and lo ! there rose instead
A glorious banner, all the folds whereof
Rippled with flashing fire of rubies sown
Thick on the silver threads, the rays wherefrom
Set forth new words and weighty sentences
Whose message made all living creatures glad ;
And from the east the wind of sunrise blew
With tender waft, opening those jewelled scrolls
So that all flesh might read ; and wondrous blooms —
Plucked in what clime I know not — fell in showers,
Colored as none are colored in our groves.'

Then spake the Prince : ' All this, my lotus-flower !
Was good to see.'

' Ay, Lord,' the Princess said,
' Save that it ended with a voice of fear
Crying, " The time is nigh ! the time is nigh ! "
Thereat the third dream came ; for when I sought
Thy side, sweet Lord ! ah, on our bed there lay
An unpressed pillow and an empty robe —
Nothing of thee but those ! — nothing of thee,
Who art my life and light, my king, my world !
And sleeping still I rose, and sleeping saw
Thy belt of pearls, tied here below my breasts,
Change to a stinging snake ; my ankle-rings
Fall off, my golden bangles part and fall ;
The jasmines in my hair wither to dust ;
While this our bridal-couch sank to the ground,
And something rent the crimson purdah down ;
Then far away I heard the white bull low,
And far away the embroidered banner flap,
And once again that cry, " The time is come ! "
But with that cry — which shakes my spirit still —
I woke ! O prince ! what may such visions mean

Except I die, or — worse than any death —
 Thou shouldst forsake me or be taken ?'

Sweet

As the last smile of sunset was the look
 Siddārtha bent upon his weeping wife.
 'Comfort thee, dear !' he said, 'if comfort lives
 In changeless love ; for though thy dreams may be
 Shadows of things to come, and though the gods
 Are shaken in their seats, and though the world
 Stands nigh, perchance, to know some way of help,
 Yet, whatsoever fall to thee and me,
 Be sure I loved and love Yasôdhara.
 Thou knowest how I muse these many moons,
 Seeking to save the sad earth I have seen ;
 And when the time comes, that which will be will.
 But if my soul yearns sore for souls unknown,
 And if I grieve for griefs which are not mine,
 Judge how my high-winged thoughts must hover here
 O'er all these lives that share and sweeten mine —
 So dear ! and thine the dearest, gentlest, best,
 And nearest. Ah, thou mother of my babe !
 Whose body mixed with mine for this fair hope,
 When most my spirit wanders, ranging round
 The lands and seas — as full of ruth for men
 As the far-flying dove is full of ruth
 For her twin nestlings — ever it has come
 Home with glad wing and passionate plumes to thee,
 Who art the sweetness of my kind best seen,
 The utmost of their good, the tenderest
 Of all their tenderness, mine most of all.
 Therefore, whatever after this betide,
 Bethink thee of that lordly bull which lowed,
 That jewelled banner in thy dream which waved
 Its folds departing, and of this be sure,
 Always I loved and always love thee well,
 And what I sought for all sought most for thee.

But thou, take comfort ; and, if sorrow falls,
Take comfort still in deeming there may be
A way of peace on earth by woes of ours ;
And have with this embrace what faithful love
Can think of thanks or frame for benison —
Too little, seeing love's strong self is weak —
Yet kiss me on the mouth, and drink these words
From heart to heart therewith, that thou mayst know —
What others will not — that I loved thee most
Because I loved so well all living souls.
Now, princess ! rest, for I will rise and watch.'

Then in her tears she slept, but sleeping sighed —
As if that vision passed again — 'The time !
The time is come !' Whereat Siddârtha turned,
And, lo ! the moon shone by the Crab ! the stars
In that same silver order long foretold
Stood ranged to say, 'This is the night ! — choose thou
The way of greatness or the way of good :
To reign a king of kings, or wander lone,
Crownless and homeless, that the world be helped.'
Moreover, with the whispers of the gloom
Came to his ears again that warning song,
As when the Devas spoke upon the wind :
And surely gods were round about the place
Watching our Lord, who watched the shining stars.

'I will depart,' he spake ; 'the hour is come !
Thy tender lips, dear sleeper, summon me
To that which saves the earth but sunders us ;
And in the silence of yon sky I read
My fated message flashing. Unto this
Came I, and unto this all nights and days
Have led me ; for I will not have that crown
Which may be mine : I lay aside those realms
Which wait the gleaming of my naked sword :

My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels
 From victory to victory, till earth
 Wears the red record of my name. I choose
 To tread its paths with patient, stainless feet,
 Making its dust my bed, its loneliest wastes
 My dwelling, and its meanest things my mates :
 Clad in no prouder garb than outcasts wear,
 Fed with no meats save what the charitable
 Give of their will, sheltered by no more pomp
 Than the dim cave lends or the jungle-bush.
 This will I do because the woful cry
 Of life and all flesh living cometh up
 Into my ears, and all my soul is full
 Of pity for the sickness of this world ;
 Which I will heal, if healing may be found
 By uttermost renouncing and strong strife.
 For which of all the great and lesser gods
 Have power or pity? Who hath seen them — who?
 What have they wrought to help their worshippers?
 How hath it steadied man to pray, and pay
 Tithes of the corn and oil, to chant the charms,
 To slay the shrieking sacrifice, to rear
 The stately fane, to feed the priests, and call
 On Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, who save
 None — not the worthiest — from the griefs that teach
 Those litanies of flattery and fear
 Ascending day by day, like wasted smoke?
 Hath any of my brothers 'scaped thereby
 The aches of life, the stings of love and loss,
 The fiery fever and the ague-shake,
 The slow, dull sinking into withered age,
 The horrible dark death — and what beyond
 Waits — till the whirling wheel comes up again,
 And new lives bring new sorrows to be borne,
 New generations for the new desires
 Which have their end in the old mockeries?

Hath any of my tender sisters found
Fruit of the fast or harvest of the hymn,
Or bought one pang the less at bearing-time
For white curds offered and trim tulsi-leaves?
Nay; it may be some of the gods are good
And evil some, but all in action weak;
Both pitiful and pitiless, and both —
As men are — bound upon this wheel of change,
Knowing the former and the after lives.
For so our scriptures truly seem to teach,
That — once, and wheresoe'er, and whence begun —
Life runs its rounds of living, climbing up
From mote, and gnat, and worm, reptile, and fish,
Bird and shagged beast, man, demon, deva, God,
To clod and mote again; so are we kin
To all that is; and thus, if one might save
Man from his curse, the whole wide world should share
The lightened horror of this ignorance
Whose shadow is chill fear, and cruelty
Its bitter pastime. Yea, if one might save!
And means must be! There must be refuge! Men
Perished in winter-winds till one smote fire
From flint-stones coldly hiding what they held,
The red spark treasured from the kindling sun.
They gorged on flesh like wolves, till one sowed corn,
Which grew a weed, yet makes the life of man;
They mowed and babbled till some tongue struck speech,
And patient fingers framed the lettered sound.
What good gift have my brothers, but it came
From search and strife and loving sacrifice?
If one, then, being great and fortunate,
Rich, dowered with health and ease, from birth designed
To rule — if he would rule — a King of kings;
If one, not tired with life's long day but glad
I' the freshness of its morning, one not cloyed
With love's delicious feasts, but hungry still;

If one not worn and wrinkled, sadly sage,
 But joyous in the glory and the grace
 That mix with evils here, and free to choose
 Earth's loveliest at his will : one even as I,
 Who ache not, lack not, grieve not, save with griefs
 Which are not mine, except as I am man ; —
 If such a one, having so much to give,
 Gave all, laying it down for love of men,
 And thenceforth spent himself to search for truth,
 Wringing the secret of deliverance forth,
 Whether it lurk in hells or hide in heavens,
 Or hover, unrevealed, nigh unto all :
 Surely at last, far off, sometime, somewhere,
 The veil would lift for his deep-searching eyes,
 The road would open for his painful feet,
 That should be won for which he lost the world,
 And Death might find him conqueror of death.
 This will I do, who have a realm to lose,
 Because I love my realm, because my heart
 Beats with each throb of all the hearts that ache,
 Known and unknown, these that are mine and those
 Which shall be mine, a thousand million more
 Saved by this sacrifice I offer now.
 Oh, summoning stars ! I come ! Oh mournful earth !
 For thee and thine I lay aside my youth,
 My throne, my joys, my golden days, my nights,
 My happy palace — and thine arms, sweet queen !
 Harder to put aside than all the rest !
 Yet thee, too, I shall save, saving this earth ;
 And that which stirs within thy tender womb,
 My child, the hidden blossom of our loves,
 Whom if I wait to bless my mind will fail.
 Wife ! child ! father ! and people ! ye must share
 A little while the anguish of this hour
 That light may break and all flesh learn the Law.
 Now am I fixed, and now I will depart,

Never to come again till what I seek
Be found — if fervent search and strife avail.'

So with his brow he touched her feet, and bent
The farewell of fond eyes, unutterable,
Upon her sleeping face, still wet with tears;
And thrice around the bed in reverence,
As though it were an altar, softly stepped
With clasped hands laid upon his beating heart,
'For never,' spake he, 'lie I there again!'
And thrice he made to go, but thrice came back,
So strong her beauty was, so large his love:
Then, o'er his head drawing his cloth, he turned
And raised the purdah's edge.

*SIDDÂRTHA AND THE MOTHER OF THE DEAD
CHILD.*

FROM BOOK V.

WHILE the Master spake
Blew down the mount the dust of pattering feet,
White goats and black sheep winding slow their way,
With many a lingering nibble at the tufts,
And wanderings from the path, where water gleamed
Or wild figs hung. But always as they strayed
The herdsman cried, or slung his sling, and kept
The silly crowd still moving to the plain.
A ewe with couplets in the flock there was,
Some hurt had lamed one lamb, which toiled behind
Bleeding, while in the front its fellow skipped,
And the vexed dam hither and thither ran,
Fearful to lose this little one or that;
Which when our Lord did mark, full tenderly
He took the limping lamb upon his neck,
Saying, 'Poor woolly mother, be at peace!

Whither thou goest I will bear thy care ;
 'T were all as good to ease one beast of grief
 As sit and watch the sorrows of the world
 In yonder caverns with the priests who pray.'

'But,' spake he to the herdsmen, 'wherefore, friends !
 Drive ye the flocks adown under high noon,
 Since 't is at evening that men fold their sheep?'

And answer gave the peasants : ' We are sent
 To fetch a sacrifice of goats five score,
 And five score sheep, the which our Lord the King
 Slayeth this night in worship of his gods.'

Then said the Master : ' I will also go !'
 So paced he patiently, bearing the lamb
 Beside the herdsmen in the dust and sun,
 The wistful ewe low-bleating at his feet.

Whom, when they came unto the river-side,
 A woman — dove-eyed, young, with tearful face
 And lifted hands — saluted, bending low :
 ' Lord ! thou art he,' she said, ' who yesterday
 Had pity on me in the fig-grove here,
 Where I live lone and reared my child ; but he
 Straying amid the blossoms found a snake,
 Which twined about his wrist, whilst he did laugh
 And tease the quick forked tongue and opened mouth
 Of that cold playmate. But, alas ! ere long
 He turned so pale and still, I could not think
 Why he should cease to play, and let my breast
 Fall from his lips. And one said, " He is sick
 Of poison ;" and another, " He will die."
 But I, who could not lose my precious boy,
 Prayed of them physic, which might bring the light
 Back to his eyes ; it was so very small
 That kiss-mark of the serpent, and I think

It could not hate him, gracious as he was,
 Nor hurt him in his sport. And some one said,
 "There is a holy man upon the hill —
 Lo! now he passeth in the yellow robe —
 Ask of the Rishi if there be a cure
 For that which ails thy son." Whereon I came
 Trembling to thee, whose brow is like a god's,
 And wept and drew the face-cloth from my babe,
 Praying thee tell what simples might be good.
 And thou, great sir! didst spurn me not, but gaze
 With gentle eyes and touch with patient hand;
 Then draw the face-cloth back, saying to me,
 "Yea! little sister, there is that might heal
 Thee first, and him, if thou couldst fetch the thing;
 For they who seek physicians bring to them
 What is ordained. Therefore, I pray thee, find
 Black mustard-seed, a tola; only mark
 Thou take it not from any hand or house
 Where father, mother, child, or slave hath died;
 It shall be well if thou canst find such seed."
 Thus didst thou speak, my Lord!

The Master smiled

Exceeding tenderly. 'Yea! I spake thus,
 Dear Kisagôtami! But didst thou find
 The seed?'

'I went, Lord, clasping to my breast
 The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut —
 Here in the jungle and toward the town —
 "I pray you, give me mustard, of your grace,
 A tola — black;" and each who had it gave,
 For all the poor are piteous to the poor;
 But when I asked, "In my friend's household here
 Hath any peradventure ever died —
 Husband or wife, or child, or slave?" they said:
 "O sister! what is this you ask? the dead
 Are very many, and the living few!"

So with sad thanks I gave the mustard back,
 And prayed of others; but the others said,
 "Here is the seed, but we have lost our slave!"
 "Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!"
 "Here is some seed, but he that sowed it died
 Between the rain-time and the harvesting!"
 Ah, sir! I could not find a single house
 Where there was mustard-seed and none had died!
 Therefore I left my child — who would not suck
 Nor smile — beneath the wild-vines by the stream,
 To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
 Where I might find this seed and find no death,
 If now, indeed, my baby be not dead,
 As I do fear, and as they said to me.'

'My sister! thou hast found,' the Master said,
 'Searching for what none finds — that bitter balm
 I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept
 Dead on thy bosom yesterday: to-day
 Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps with thy woe:
 The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
 Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
 Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
 Which makes sweet love our anguish, and which drives
 O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice —
 As these dumb beasts are driven — men their lords.
 I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!'

SHE AND HE.

'SHE is dead!' they said to him. 'Come away;
 Kiss her! and leave her! — thy love is clay!'

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
 On her forehead of marble they laid it fair:

Over her eyes, which gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch ;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell ;

About her brows, and her dear, pale face
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace ;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes ; —
Which were the whiter no eye could choose !

And over her bosom they crossed her hands ;
'Come away,' they said, — 'God understands !'

And then there was Silence ; — and nothing there
But the Silence — and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary ;
For they said, 'As a lady should lie, lies she !'

And they held their breath as they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he — who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead, —

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turned it ! — Alone again — he and she !

He and she ; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek ;

He and she ; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name that was fondest erewhile.

He and she ; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love !

Then he said, 'Cold lips ! and breast without breath !
Is there no voice ? — no language of death

'Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct, — intense?

'See, now, — I listen with soul, not ear —
What was the secret of dying, Dear?

'Was it the infinite wonder of all,
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

'Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

'Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?

'Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

'And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so what a wisdom love is?

'Oh, perfect Dead! Oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear;

'I listen — as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven! — and you do not tell!

'There must be pleasure in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

'I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 't were your hot tears upon *my* brow shed.

'I would say, though the angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

'*You* should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise;

'The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring.'

.
 Ah ! foolish world ! Oh ! most kind Dead
 Though he told me, who will believe it was said ?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
 With the soft rich voice, in the dear old way : —

‘ The utmost wonder is this, — I hear,
 And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear ;

‘ I can speak, now you listen with soul alone ;
 If your soul could see, it would all be shown

‘ What a strange delicious amazement is Death,
 To be without body and breathe without breath.

‘ I should laugh for joy if you did not cry ;
 Oh, listen ! Love lasts ! — Love never will die.

‘ I am only your Angel who was your Bride ;
 And I know, that though dead, I have never died.’

AFTER DEATH IN ARABIA.

HE who died at Azan sends
 This to comfort all his friends :

Faithful friends ! It lies, I know,
 Pale and white and cold as snow ;
 And ye say, ‘ Abdallah ’s dead !’
 Weeping at the feet and head,
 I can see your falling tears,
 I can hear your sighs and prayers ;
 Yet I smile and whisper this, —
 ‘ I am not the thing you kiss ;
 Cease your tears, and let it lie ;
 It *was* mine, it is not I.’

Sweet friends ! What the women lave
 For its last bed of the grave,
 Is a tent which I am quitting,
 Is a garment no more fitting,
 Is a cage from which, at last,
 Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
 Love the inmate, not the room, —
 The wearer, not the garb, — the plume
 Of the falcon, not the bars
 Which kept him from those splendid stars.

Loving friends ! Be wise and dry
 Straightway every weeping eye, —
 What ye lift upon the bier
 Is not worth a wistful tear.
 'T is an empty sea-shell, — one
 Out of which the pearl is gone ;
 The shell is broken, it lies there ;
 The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
 'T is an earthen jar, whose lid
 Allah sealed, the while it hid
 That treasure of his treasury,
 A mind that loved him ; let it lie !
 Let the shard be earth's once more,
 Since the gold shines in his store !

Allah glorious ! Allah good !
 Now thy world is understood ;
 Now the long, long wonder ends ;
 Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
 While the man whom ye call dead,
 In unspoken bliss, instead,
 Lives and loves you ; lost, 't is true,
 By such light as shines for you ;
 But in the light ye cannot see
 Of unfulfilled felicity, —

In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends ! Yet not farewell ;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept ;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain, —
Sunshine still must follow rain ;
Only not at death, — for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above ;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home !
La Allah illa Allah ! yea !
Thou love divine ! Thou love alway !

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

JAMES THOMSON.

FROM 'THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT.'⁸

I.

THE City is of Night ; perchance of Death,
 But certainly of Night ; for never there
 Can come the lucid morning's fragrant breath
 After the dewy dawning's cold gray air ;
 The moon and stars may shine with scorn or pity ;
 The sun has never visited that city,
 For it dissolveth in the daylight fair.

Dissolveth like a dream of night away ;
 Though present in distempered gloom of thought
 And deadly weariness of heart all day.

But when a dream night after night is brought
 Throughout a week, and such weeks few or many
 Recur each year for several years, can any
 Discern that dream from real life in aught ?

For life is but a dream whose shapes return,
 Some frequently, some seldom, some by night
 And some by day, some night and day : we learn,
 The while all change and many vanish quite,
 In their recurrence with recurrent changes
 A certain seeming order ; where this ranges
 We count things real ; such is memory's might.

A river girds the city west and south,
 The main north channel of a broad lagoon,

Regurging with the salt tides from the mouth ;
Waste marshes shine and glisten to the moon
For leagues, then moorland black, then stony ridges ;
Great piers and causeways, many noble bridges,
Connect the town and islet suburbs strewn.

Upon an easy slope it lies at large,
And scarcely overlaps the long curved crest
Which swells out two leagues from the river marge.
A trackless wilderness rolls north and west,
Savannahs, savage woods, enormous mountains,
Bleak uplands, black ravines with torrent fountains ;
And eastward rolls the shipless sea's unrest.

The city is not ruinous, although
Great ruins of an unremembered past,
With others of a few short years ago
More sad, are found within its precincts vast.
The street-lamps always burn ; but scarce a casement
In house or palace front from roof to basement
Doth glow or gleam athwart the mirk air cast.

The street-lamps burn amidst the baleful glooms,
Amidst the soundless solitudes immense
Of rangèd mansions dark and still as tombs.
The silence which benumbs or strains the sense
Fulfil with awe the soul's despair unweeping :
Myriads of habitants are ever sleeping,
Or dead, or fled from nameless pestilence !

Yet as in some necropolis you find
Perchance one mourner to a thousand dead,
So there ; worn faces that look deaf and blind
Like tragic masks of stone. With weary tread,
Each wrapt in his own doom, they wander, wander,
Or sit foredone and desolately ponder
Through sleepless hours with heavy drooping head.

Mature men chiefly, few in age or youth,
 A woman rarely, now and then a child :
 A child ! If here the heart turns sick with ruth
 To see a little one from birth defiled,
 Or lame or blind, as preordained to languish
 Through youthless life, think how it bleeds with anguish
 To meet one erring in that homeless wild.

They often murmur to themselves, they speak
 To one another seldom, for their woe
 Broods maddening inwardly and scorns to wreak
 Itself abroad ; and if at whiles it grow
 To frenzy which must rave, none heeds the clamor,
 Unless there waits some victim of like glamour,
 To rave in turn, who lends attentive show.

The City is of Night, but not of Sleep :
 There sweet sleep is not for the weary brain ;
 The pitiless hours like years and ages creep,
 A night seems termless hell. This dreadful strain
 Of thought and consciousness which never ceases,
 Or which some moments' stupor but increases,
 This, worse than woe, makes wretches there insane.

They leave all hope behind who enter there :
 One certitude while sane they cannot leave,
 One anodyne for torture and despair ;
 The certitude of Death, which no reprieve
 Can put off long ; and which, divinely tender,
 But waits the outstretched hand to promptly render
 That draught whose slumber nothing can bereave.

II.

BECAUSE he seemed to walk with an intent
 I followed him ; who, shadowlike and frail,
 Unswervingly though slowly onward went,
 Regardless, wrapt in thought as in a veil :

Thus step for step with lonely sounding feet
He travelled many a long dim silent street.

At length he paused ; a black mass in the gloom,
A tower that merged into the heavy sky ;
Around, the huddled stones of grave and tomb :
Some old God's-acre now corruption's sty :
He murmured to himself with dull despair,
Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air.

Then turning to the right went on once more,
And travelled weary roads without suspense ;
And reached at last a low wall's open door,
Whose villa gleamed beyond the foliage dense :
He gazed, and muttered with a hard despair,
Here Love died, stabbed by its own worshipped pair.

Then turning to the right resumed his march,
And travelled streets and lanes with wondrous strength,
Until on stooping through a narrow arch
We stood before a squalid house at length :
He gazed, and whispered with a cold despair,
Here Hope died, starved out in its utmost lair.

When he had spoken thus, before he stirred,
I spoke, perplexed by something in the signs
Of desolation I had seen and heard
In this drear pilgrimage to ruined shrines :
When Faith and Love and Hope are dead indeed,
Can Life still live ? By what doth it proceed ?

As whom his one intense thought overpowers,
He answered coldly, Take a watch, erase
The signs and figures of the circling hours,
Detach the hands, remove the dial-face ;
The works proceed until run down ; although
Bereft of purpose, void of use, still go.

Then turning to the right paced on again,
 And traversed squares and travelled streets whose glooms
 Seemed more and more familiar to my pen ;
 And reached that sullen temple of the tombs ;
 And paused to murmur with the old despair,
 Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air.

I ceased to follow, for the knot of doubt
 Was severed sharply with a cruel knife :
 He circled thus for ever tracing out
 The series of the fraction left of Life ;
 Perpetual recurrence in the scope
 Of but three terms, dead Faith, dead Love, dead Hope.

XIX.

THE mighty river flowing dark and deep,
 With ebb and flood from the remote sea-tides
 Vague-sounding through the City's sleepless sleep,
 Is named the River of the Suicides ;
 For night by night some lorn wretch overweary,
 And shuddering from the future yet more dreary,
 Within its cold secure oblivion hides.

One plunges from a bridge's parapet,
 As by some blind and sudden frenzy hurled ;
 Another wades in slow with purpose set
 Until the waters are above him furled ;
 Another in a boat with dreamlike motion
 Glides drifting down into the desert ocean,
 To starve or sink from out the desert world.

They perish from their suffering surely thus,
 For none beholding them attempts to save,
 The while each thinks how soon, solicitous,
 He may seek refuge in the self-same wave ;
 Some hour when tired of ever-vain endurance

Impatience will forerun the sweet assurance
Of perfect peace eventual in the grave.

When this poor tragic-farce has palled us long,
Why actors and spectators do we stay? —
To fill our so-short *rôles* out right or wrong;
To see what shifts are yet in the dull play
For our illusion; to refrain from grieving
Dear foolish friends by our untimely leaving:
But those asleep at home, how blest are they!

Yet it is but for one night after all:
What matters one brief night of dreary pain?
When after it the weary eyelids fall
Upon the weary eyes and wasted brain;
And all sad scenes and thoughts and feelings vanish
In that sweet sleep no power can ever banish,
That one best sleep which never wakes again.

XX.

I SAT me weary on a pillar's base,
And leaned against the shaft; for broad moonlight
O'erflowed the peacefulness of cloistered space,
A shore of shadow slanting from the right:
The great cathedral's western front stood there,
A wave-worn rock in that calm sea of air.

Before it, opposite my place of rest,
Two figures faced each other, large, austere;
A couchant sphinx in shadow to the breast,
An angel standing in the moonlight clear;
So mighty by magnificence of form,
They were not dwarfed beneath that mass enorm.

Upon the cross-hilt of a naked sword
The angel's hands, as prompt to smite, were held;

His vigilant, intense regard was poured
 Upon the creature placidly unquelled,
 Whose front was set at level gaze which took
 No heed of aught, a solemn trance-like look.

And as I pondered these opposèd shapes
 My eyelids sank in stupor, that dull swoon
 Which drugs and with a leaden mantle drapes
 The outworn to worse weariness. But soon
 A sharp and clashing noise the stillness broke,
 And from the evil lethargy I woke.

The angel's wings had fallen, stone on stone,
 And lay there shattered ; hence the sudden sound :
 A warrior leaning on his sword alone
 Now watched the sphinx with that regard profound ;
 The sphinx unchanged looked forthright, as aware
 Of nothing in the vast abyss of air.

Again I sank in that repose unsweet,
 Again a clashing noise my slumber rent ;
 The warrior's sword lay broken at his feet :
 An unarmed man with raised hands impotent
 Now stood before the sphinx, which ever kept
 Such mien as if with open eyes it slept.

My eyelids sank in spite of wonder grown ;
 A louder crash upstartled me in dread :
 The man had fallen forward, stone on stone,
 And lay there shattered, with his trunkless head
 Between the monster's large quiescent paws,
 Beneath its grand front changeless as life's laws.

The moon had circled westward full and bright,
 And made the temple-front a mystic dream,
 And bathed the whole enclosure with its light,
 The sworded angel's wrecks, the sphinx supreme :
 I pondered long that cold majestic face
 Whose vision seemed of infinite void space.

XXI.

ANEAR the centre of that northern crest
Stands out a level upland bleak and bare,
From which the city east and south and west
Sinks gently in long waves ; and thronèd there
An Image sits, stupendous, superhuman,
The bronze colossus of a wingèd Woman,
Upon a graded granite base foursquare.

Low-seated she leans forward massively,
With cheek on clenched left hand, the forearm's might
Erect, its elbow on her rounded knee ;
Across a clasped book in her lap the right
Upholds a pair of compasses ; she gazes
With full set eyes, but wandering in thick mazes
Of sombre thought beholds no outward sight.

Words cannot picture her ; but all men know
That solemn sketch the pure sad artist wrought
Three centuries and threescore years ago,
With phantasies of his peculiar thought :
The instruments of carpentry and science
Scattered about her feet, in strange alliance
With the keen wolf-hound sleeping undistraught ;

Scales, hour-glass, bell, and magic-square above
The grave and solid infant perched beside,
With open winglets that might bear a dove,
Intent upon its tablets, heavy-eyed ;
Her folded wings as of a mighty eagle,
But all too impotent to lift the regal
Robustness of her earth-born strength and pride ;

And with those wings, and that light wreath which seems
To mock her grand head and the knotted frown

Of forehead charged with baleful thoughts and dreams,
 The household bunch of keys, the housewife's gown
 Voluminous, indented, and yet rigid
 As if a shell of burnished metal frigid,
 The feet thick-shod to tread all weakness down ;

The comet hanging o'er the waste dark seas,
 The massy rainbow curved in front of it
 Beyond the village with the masts and trees ;
 The snaky imp, dog-headed, from the Pit,
 Bearing upon its batlike leathern pinions
 Her name unfolded in the sun's dominions,
 The ' MELENCOLIA ' that transcends all wit.

Thus has the artist copied her, and thus
 Surrounded to expound her form sublime,
 Her fate heroic and calamitous ;
 Fronting the dreadful mysteries of Time,
 Unvanquished in defeat and desolation,
 Undaunted in the hopeless conflagration
 Of the day setting on her baffled prime.

Baffled and beaten back she works on still,
 Weary and sick of soul she works the more,
 Sustained by her indomitable will :
 The hands shall fashion and the brain shall pore,
 And all her sorrow shall be turned to labor,
 Till Death the friend-foe piercing with his sabre
 That mighty heart of hearts ends bitter war.

But as if blacker night could dawn on night,
 With tenfold gloom on moonless night unstarred,
 A sense more tragic than defeat and blight,
 More desperate than strife with hope debarred,
 More fatal than the adamantine Never
 Encompassing her passionate endeavor,
 Dawns glooming in her tenebrous regard :

The sense that every struggle brings defeat
Because Fate holds no prize to crown success ;
That all the oracles are dumb or cheat
Because they have no secret to express ;
That none can pierce the vast black veil uncertain
Because there is no light beyond the curtain ;
That all is vanity and nothingness.

Titanic from her high throne in the north,
That City's sombre Patroness and Queen,
In bronze sublimity she gazes forth
Over her Capital of teen and threne,
Over the river with its isles and bridges,
The marsh and moorland, to the stern rock-ridges,
Confronting them with a coëval mien.

The moving moon and stars from east to west
Circle before her in the sea of air ;
Shadows and gleams glide round her solemn rest.
Her subjects often gaze up to her there :
The strong to drink new strength of iron endurance,
The weak new terrors ; all, renewed assurance
And confirmation of the old despair.

A VOICE FROM THE NILE.

I COME from mountains under other stars
Than those reflected in my waters here ;
Athwart broad realms, beneath large skies, I flow,
Between the Libyan and Arabian hills,
And merge at last into the great Mid-Sea ;
And make this land of Egypt. All is mine :
The palm-trees and the doves among the palms,
The corn-fields and the flowers among the corn,
The patient oxen and the crocodiles,
The ibis and the heron and the hawk,
The lotus and the thick papyrus reeds,

The slant-sailed boats that flit before the wind
 Or up my rapids ropes hale heavily ;
 Yea, even all the massive temple-fronts
 With all their columns and huge effigies,
 The pyramids and memnon and the sphinx,
 This Cairo and the City of the Greek
 As Memphis and the hundred-gated Thebes,
 Sais and Denderah of Isis queen ;
 Have grown because I fed them with full life,
 And flourish only while I feed them still.
 For if I stint my fertilizing flood,
 Gaunt famine reaps among the sons of men
 Who have not corn to reap for all they sowed,
 And blight and languishment are everywhere ;
 And when I have withdrawn or turned aside
 To other realms my ever-flowing streams,
 The old realms withered from their old renown,
 The sands came over them, the desert-sands
 Incessantly encroaching, numberless
 Beyond my water-drops, and buried them,
 And all is silence, solitude, and death,
 Exanimate silence while the waste winds howl
 Over the sad immeasurable waste.

Dusk memories haunt me of an infinite past,
 Ages and cycles brood above my springs,
 Though I remember not my primal birth.
 So ancient is my being and august,
 I know not anything more venerable ;
 Unless, perchance, the vaulting skies that hold
 The sun and moon and stars that shine on me ;
 The air that breathes upon me with delight ;
 And Earth, All-Mother, all-beneficent,
 Who held her mountains forth like opulent breasts
 To cradle me and feed me with their snows,
 And hollowed out the great sea to receive

My overplus of flowing energy :
Blessèd forever be our Mother Earth.

Only, the mountains that must feed my springs
Year after year and every year with snows
As they have fed innumerable years,
These mountains they are evermore the same,
Rooted and motionless ; the solemn heavens
Are evermore the same in stable rest ;
The sun and moon and stars that shine on me
Are evermore the same although they move :
I solely, moving ever without pause,
Am evermore the same and not the same ;
Pouring myself away into the sea,
And self-renewing from the farthest heights ;
Ever-fresh waters streaming down and down,
The one old Nilus constant through their change.

The creatures also whom I breed and feed
Perpetually perish and dissolve,
And other creatures like them take their place,
To perish in their turn and be no more :
My profluent waters perish not from life,
Absorbed into the ever-living sea
Whose life is their full replenishment.

Of all these creatures whom I breed and feed,
One only with his works is strange to me,
Is strange and admirable and pitiable,
As homeless where all others are at home.
My crocodiles are happy in my slime,
And bask and seize their prey, each for itself,
And leave their eggs to hatch in the hot sun,
And die, their lives fulfilled, and are no more,
And others bask and play and leave their eggs.
My doves they build their nests, each pair its own,
And feed their callow young, each pair its own,

None serves another, each one serves itself;
 All glean alike about my fields of grain,
 And all the nests they build them are alike,
 And are the self-same nests they built of old
 Before the rearing of the pyramids,
 Before great Hekatompylos was reared;
 Their cooing is the cooing soft and sweet
 That murmured plaintively at evening-tide
 In pillared Karnak as its pillars rose;
 And they are happy floating through my palms.

But man the admirable, the pitiable,
 These sad-eyed peoples of the sons of men,
 Are as the children of an alien race
 Planted among my children, not at home,
 Changelings aloof from all my family.
 The one is servant and the other lord,
 And many myriads serve a single lord:
 So was it when the pyramids were reared,
 And sphinxes and huge columns and wrought stones
 Were haled long lengthening leagues adown my banks
 By hundreds groaning with the stress of toil
 And groaning under the taskmaster's scourge,
 With many falling foredone by the way,
 Half-starved on lentils, onions, and scant bread;
 So is it now with these poor fellaheen
 To whom my annual bounty brings fierce toil
 With scarce enough of food to keep-in life.
 They build mud huts and spacious palaces;
 And in the huts the moiling millions dwell,
 And in the palaces their sumptuous lords
 Pampered with all the choicest things I yield:
 Most admirable, most pitiable Man.

Also their peoples ever are at war,
 Slaying and slain, burning and ravaging,

And one yields to another and they pass,
While I flow evermore the same great Nile,
The ever-young and ever-ancient Nile:
The swarthy is succeeded by the dusk,
The dusky by the pale, the pale again
By sunburned turbaned tribes long-linen-robed:
And with these changes all things change and pass,
All things but Me and this old Land of mine,
Their dwellings, habitudes, and garbs, and tongues:
I hear strange voices; never more the voice
Austere priests chanted to the boat of death
Gliding across the Acherusian lake,
Or satraps parleyed in the Pharaoh's halls;
Never the voice of mad Cambyzes' hosts,
Never the voice of Alexander's Greece,
Never the voice of Cæsar's haughty Rome:
And with the peoples and the languages,
With the great Empires still the great Creeds change;
They shift, they change, they vanish like thin dreams,
As unsubstantial as the mists that rise
After my overflow from out my fields,
In silver fleeces, golden volumes, rise,
And melt away before the mounting sun;
While I flow onward solely permanent
Amidst their swiftly-passing pageantry.
Poor men, most admirable, most pitiable,
With all their changes all their great Creeds change:
For Man, this alien in my family,
Is alien most in this, to cherish dreams
And brood on visions of eternity,
And build religions in his brooding brain
And in the dark depths awe-full of his soul.
My other children live their little lives,
Are born and reach their prime and slowly fail,
And all their little lives are self-fulfilled;
They die and are no more, content with age

And weary with infirmity. But Man
 Has fear and hope and phantasy and awe,
 And wistful yearnings and unsated loves,
 That strain beyond the limits of his life,
 And therefore Gods and Demons, Heaven and Hell :
 This Man, the admirable, the pitiable.

Lo, I look backward some few thousand years,
 And see men hewing temples in my rocks
 With seated forms gigantic fronting them,
 And solemn labyrinthine catacombs
 With tombs all pictured with fair scenes of life
 And scenes and symbols of mysterious death ;
 And planting avenues of sphinxes forth,
 Sphinxes couched calm, whose passionless regard
 Sets timeless riddles to bewildered time,
 Forth from my sacred banks to other fanes
 Islanded in the boundless sea of air,
 Upon whose walls and colonnades are carved
 Tremendous hieroglyphs of secret things ;
 I see embalming of the bodies dead
 And judging of the disembodied souls ;
 I see the sacred animals alive,
 And statues of the various-headed gods,
 Among them throned a woman and a babe,
 The goddess crescent-horned, the babe divine.
 Then I flow forward some few thousand years,
 And see new temples shining with all grace,
 Whose sculptured gods are beautiful human forms.
 Then I flow forward not a thousand years,
 And see again a woman and a babe,
 The woman haloed and the babe divine ;
 And everywhere that symbol of the cross
 I knew aforetime in the ancient days,
 The emblem then of life, but now of death.
 Then I flow forward some few hundred years,

And see again the crescent, now supreme
 On lofty cupolas and minarets
 Whence voices sweet and solemn call to prayer.
 So the men change along my changeless stream,
 And change their faiths ; but I yield all alike
 Sweet water for their drinking, sweet as wine,
 And pure sweet water for their lustral rites :
 For thirty generations of my corn
 Outlast a generation of my men,
 And thirty generations of my men
 Outlast a generation of their gods :
 O admirable, pitiable Man,
 My child yet alien in my family.

And I through all these generations flow
 Of corn and men and gods, all-bountiful,
 Perennial through their transientness, still fed
 By earth with waters in abundancy ;
 And as I flowed here long before they were,
 So may I flow when they no longer are,
 Most like the serpent of eternity :
 Blessèd for ever be our Mother Earth.

FROM 'SUNDAY UP THE RIVER.'⁹

II.

'O, WHAT are you waiting for here ? young man !
 What are you looking for over the bridge ? — '
 A little straw hat with the streaming blue ribbons
 Is soon to come dancing over the bridge.

Her heart beats the measure that keeps her feet dancing,
 Dancing along like a wave o' the sea ;
 Her heart pours the sunshine with which her eyes glancing
 Light up strange faces, in looking for me.

The strange faces brighten in meeting her glances ;
The strangers all bless her, pure, lovely, and free ;
She fancies she walks, but her walk skips and dances,
Her heart makes such music in coming to me.

O, thousands and thousands of happy young maidens
Are tripping this morning their sweethearts to see :
But none whose heart beats to a sweeter love-cadence
Than hers who will brighten the sunshine for me.

‘ O what are you waiting for here ? young man !
What are you looking for over the bridge ? — ’
A little straw hat with the streaming blue ribbons.
— And here it comes dancing over the bridge.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

HYMN TO DEATH.

WHAT is it haunts the summer air ?
A sense of something lately passed away ;
Something pleasant, something fair,
That was with us yesterday,
And is no longer there.
Now from the pasture comes no baby bleat,
Nor the frisk of frolic feet
There is seen.
Blossom and bloom have spread their wings, and flown,
And the bosks and orchards green
The rosy flush of childhood have outgrown.
Lapwing and linnet and lark have fledged their brood ;
Mavis and merle have gotten their desire ;
The nightingale begins to tire ;
Even the cuckoo's note hath fitful grown ;
And in the closing leafage of the wood
The ringdove now is left to coo alone.

Then revel in your roses, reckless June !
Revel and ripen swift to your decay.
But your turn will follow soon,
And the rounding harvest-moon
Avenge the too brief innocence of May.
Yet once again there scents the morning air
The soul of something passed away ;

Something precious, something fair,
 That was breathing yesterday,
 And is no longer there.
 It is Autumn, dying, dying,
 With her leaves around her lying,
 And Winter, beggared heir, unprofitably sighing.
 Let her die.

Unto us as unto her
 Earth is but a sepulchre,
 And the over-arching sky
 Neither asks nor wonders why
 Those who here are left behind
 Season sweet and spacious mind
 Fain would save ;
 Yet with pale visages and streaming tears
 Must watch the harvest of the ripened years
 Locked in the bootless granary of the grave.

Why do you call me hence ?
 To purge what fault, to punish what offence ?
 Had I maligned my lot,
 Or ever once the privilege forgot
 Of being, through the spirit's inward sense,
 Mirror and measure of all things that are,
 'Then it were right, were just,
 That, like a falling leaf or failing star,
 The winds of Heaven should blow about my dust.
 Or had I used the years as waifs and strays,
 To build myself a comfortable nest,
 Cropped life for golden garbage, like the rest,
 And, as a lacquey, on the public ways
 For private profit hired out my tongue,
 Then against death 't were vain to plead,
 Then, then 't were meet indeed
 I should grow silenced, like a bell unrung.
 But bear me witness, every Spring that came

Since first with trembling furtive frame
Out of my little crib I crept
While others slept,
Because to me the rising moon
Was more than sleep, or toy, or boon,
That never yet the thrush resumed to sing,
But my heart straight did build, my voice was on the wing;
Found the first primrose gazing frank
From its cradle in the bank,
Harked for the cuckoo days before he called,
Then halted, at his note enthralled.

Why do you beckon to another sphere?
Here was I born,
Am deeply rooted here,
And would not be uptorn.
I want no other fields than these,
No other skies,
No redder dawn to break on bluer seas,
No brighter stars to rise.
Neither do I crave to know
The origin of joy and woe.
I love the doubt, the dark, the fear,
That still surroundeth all things here.
I love the mystery, nor seek to solve;
Content to let the stars revolve,
Nor ask to have their meaning clear.
Enough for me, enough to feel;
To let the mystic shadows steal
Into a land whither I cannot follow;
To see the stealthy sunlight leave
Dewy dingle, dappled hollow;
To watch, when falls the hour of eve,
Quiet shadows on a quiet hill;
To watch, to wonder, and be still.

And can it be,
 That there will break the day,
 For me, for me,
 When I no more shall hear the thristle flute;
 Not because his voice is mute,
 But that my soul sleeps stupefied in clay?
 Never! what, never again!
 Deep within some silent glen
 To make a couch with peace, far from surmise of men.
 Never, never more to stand,
 Spell-bound in a leafy land,
 Lie among the grasses tall,
 Hear the yaffel call, and call,
 And lazily watch the lazy clouds slow floating over all.
 That time and life will be, but I shall ne'er
 Find little feet upon the stair,
 Feel little arms about my throat,
 Hear little gleeful voices float
 Upon the wavelets of the summer air.
 That I again shall never share
 The peace that lies upon an English lawn,
 Watch the last lingering planet shining fair
 Upon the unwrinkled forehead of the dawn.
 Never, never, never more,
 When fate or fancy bids me roam,
 Lessen with loving thoughts the last long mile
 That leads unto my home,
 Descry the roses down the casement falling,
 Hear the garden thrushes calling,
 Behold my dear ones standing at the door,
 Void of fear, void of guile,
 And hail, as I so oft have hailed before,
 The broadening salutation of their smile!

Who will salute me There?
 Who, who come forth to greet?

Will Virgil stand upon the golden stair?
Shall I take Spenser's hand, and sit at Shakespeare's feet?
Will Galileo with unshrouded gaze
Guide me through the starry maze,
Upon wings that never tire,
Up to the Heaven of Heavens, and higher and ever higher?
If this be so,
Quick let me go!
But ah! pale spectre, paler still you grow.
You would but lure me to the other bank,
To find it blank!
Of all we loved, not one hath e'er come back
To beckon us along the track,
To point the way, to indicate the goal,
And hold out steadying arms to help the tottering soul.

But wilt thou make this compact with me, Death,
And keep thy bond?
That even if mine be but borrowed breath,
Lent here awhile, to be reclaimed beyond,
And its poor husk be dug into the ground;
Then, though the Future may not find my face,
Nor arms that love me round my neck be wound,
Fair lips that lisp not yet my name shall sound,
And hearts that beat not yet be my warm dwelling-place;
That under trees which have no rootlets now,
But will then be trunk and bough
And dome of sheltering leaves, sometimes
A tender tear shall fall upon my rhymes;
And hearts at secret war with life,
Or dreaming maid or disillusioned wife,
Shall my persuasive music bless,
Shall call me comforter in their distress,
And make me live again in sorrowing loveliness.

So unto Death I do commend my Spirit,
And Time which is in league with Death, that they

May hold in trust, and see my kin inherit,
 All of me that is not clay;
 Embalm my voice and keep it from decay.
 Then I will not ask to stay; —
 Nay, rather start at once upon the way:
 Cheered by the faith that, at our mortal birth,
 For some high reason beyond Reason's ken,
 We are put out to nurse on this strange earth,
 Until Death comes to take us home again.

FROM 'THE HUMAN TRAGEDY.'¹⁰*THE JOURNEY OF GODFRID AND OLYMPIA TO
MILAN.*

FROM ACT II.

EACH valid foot of transept, nave, and aisle,
 Was dense with living things absorbed in prayer;
 Young men and maidens, children without guile,
 Gray sires with flowing beards and bosoms bare;
 Smooth sinless faces here, that seemed to smile,
 E'en as they prayed, with eyes soft-closed; and there,
 Hard furrowed visages down which the tears
 Flowed from the brackish fount of desert years.

With comely kerchief crossed o'er bosom brown,
 The humble peasant fingered her worn beads,
 Made at her side her youngsters nestle down,
 And told Madonna of her simple needs.
 Next her, a dainty dame of Milan town,
 Voluptuous e'en as southern rapture breeds,
 Bewailing in the dust her too frail breast,
 Begged Christ to be her lover and sole guest.

And many a tonsured head was there, that bore
 The ascetic cowl, surmounting garments strict;

Here the brown serge the loving Francis wore,
There the black robes of active Benedict;
And Dominic's stern habit, splashed with gore
Of heretic, 'neath which the hairshirt pricked;
And, dotted 'mong the carnal crowd anon,
Were pale-faced nuns, meek, circumspect, and wan.

When lo! throughout the kneeling multitude,
From porch to choir, a wavelike motion swept;
Swift from its sheath as starts a sword long mewed,
Up from their feet the motley concourse stepped,
And, as with one sole sovran will imbued,
In serried ranks yet close and closer crept,
Until a long straight open space they gave
Down the right aisle, and back along the nave.

Then from afar a long procession came
Of white-robed acolytes silver censers swinging,
And wreathèd flowers, and torches all aflame,
And golden bells melodiously ringing;
And fair young boys, with faces free from blame,
Tuning their callow throats to such sweet singing,
It seemed to eyes and ears of faith and fear
That Christ and all His cherubim were near.

And as they sang, the stately pomp swept on,
Crozier and Cross, inlaid with many a gem,
Taller than those that bore them; lights that shone
In golden candlesticks with jewelled stem,
And many a bright embroidered gonfalon
Vaunting aloft the new Jerusalem;
And scintillating reliquaries rare,
And awful Monstrance, whereon none may stare.

Last in the solemn train, in cope of gold
And snow-white alb, came venerable eld,

Mitre on head of more than earthly mould,
 Led by grave priests, gorgeously chasubled.
 And, as they passed, round arch and column old
 Incense and organ music rolled and swelled,
 Till the long line about the chancel poured,
 And then with one acclaim they praised the Lord.

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Then on the dense mass sudden silence fell,
 Each knee was bent, each reverent skull-cap doffed,
 Held was each breath, and, touched by unseen spell,
 The organ flutes piped silvery and soft.
 Then came the tinkle of a little bell
 And, all heads low, the Host was held aloft;
 While glinted through warm panes day's dying gleam,
 And the rapt soul touched Heaven in a dream.

Then once again the organ thundered loud,
 Usurping the high edifice with sound,
 Whereat with dumb accord the prostrate crowd
 Rose, crossed themselves, and to the doorway wound;
 And soon where, late, myriads of knees were bowed
 In phalanxed prayer, reigned solitude profound.
 The solemn notes waxed faint, then swooned away,
 And died along the aisles the light of day.

And now throughout the vague cathedral gloom,
 That here and there with lone faint lamps was flecked,
 Two forms alone were blackly seen to loom,
 A kneeling maiden, and a man erect.
 They looked like statues carven at a tomb,
 Aping the quick, with flowing drapery decked,
 And praying with fixed lips and stony head
 Till the last trump shall sound and rouse the dead.

But shortly rising, with a beckoning nod
 She drew him forward through the weird-like space,

And o'er the hard smooth marble as they trod,
Their feet made fearsome echoes in the place.
Anon she checked him: 'Stay you here with God,'
Whispering she said, 'I will be back apace.'
Then 'mong stone stems he saw her disappear,
Though still her scudding footfall reached his ear.

At length died e'en that sound away; and then,
He was alone in the tremendous gloom:
Alone with God, far from the help of men,
As anchorite, or child shut in the womb.
Like yawning space the dark roof smote his ken,
The long gaunt aisles seemed avenues of doom,
And, in the distant chancel dimly lit,
Bodiless forms, in shadow, seemed to flit.

'Angels and spirits of celestial make!'
Deep from his aching soul aloud he sighed,
'Swoop from your heights, your unseen Heaven forsake,
And now no more my lonely doubts deride.
Sound-sleeping martyrs, in your tombs awake!
Palm-bearing virgins, through the silence glide!
Can you be false who are indeed so fair?
And if I needs must pray, then hear my prayer!

'And thou, Olympia's trust, once mine no less,
Of all the Gods sweetest Divinity!
Mother, and Lady of the mild caress,
Lend me thy face! oh! give me eyes to see!
If thou canst hear, why dost thou scorn distress,
Thou before whom demons of darkness flee?
Let me behold thee once, — once, I entreat! —
E'en as Judea's mountains felt thy feet!'

Not such the prayers to which stern Heaven replies;
The lips of faith another language speak;
Celestial visions visit downcast eyes,
And those who find, not arrogantly seek.

No answer came to his presumptuous cries,
 Such as, 't is said, descends on suppliants meek,
 But only deeper darkness, and a sense
 Of unslaked thirst and yearning impotence.

At length, again, a solitary tread
 Upon the silence trespassed, far and faint ;
 Yet well he guessed 't was hers, than whom the dead
 Or never dying vaunt no purer saint.
 Nearer, and ever nearer, now it sped,
 Until his fancy her fair form could paint
 On the dark space, and then the dark space yawned,
 And she herself, no fancy, on him dawned.

'Come with me, now,' she said, in accents low,
 And turned straightway, and with such swift command
 Led 'mong dense-columned aisles, it seemed as though
 Athwart a lonesome wood where huge trunks stand,
 Baulking straight steps, together they did go,
 He strange, and she familiar in the land,
 And, overhead, thick-matted branches made
 Day night, and night a more cimmerian shade.

But shortly shone a little light ahead,
 Just level with their gaze ; a feeble flame,
 Held by a priest in cassock habited
 And in mid-doorway seen as in a frame.
 He stood as still as stand the pictured dead,
 When some deft hand makes death and life the same,
 And bids you, doubtful, nearer draw, and seek
 If that which gazes so, perchance will speak.

But ere such doubts by Godfrid could be proved,
 Sudden he missed Olympia from his side ;
 The tall dark figure in the doorway moved,
 And with fine gesture welcome fair implied.
 He, by the gracious courtesy behooved

To pass within, advanced with docile stride,
And, entering, straight the other followed him ;
Then the door closed and all again was dim.

And where then was Olympia ? Ask you where ?
She to the awful chancel back had crept,
And, her torn soul surrendered unto prayer,
Lay prone, aye prostrate, even as though she slept.
The flowing tresses of her warm, soft hair,
Dark as the gloom, the cold white marble swept ;
She moved not, spake not, sighed not ; e'en her breath
Came faint, like one that feebly copes with death.

But, rising thence at last, her body first,
She lifted, then her hands, and last her eyes ;
And floods of passionate supplication burst
Through lips long sealed, from breast o'ercharged with
sighs.

She called on Christ, on Her who bore and nursed,
On every Saint and Seraph in the skies,
And vowed herself to pain, if Heaven would save
From death the dear imperilled soul it gave.

'Oh, by thine agony and bloody sweat,
Deliver him, O Lord !' she wildly cried ;
'By Thy keen Cross and Passion, save him yet !
Save by Thy crown of thorns and bleeding side !
Why did Gethsemane Thy teardrops wet ?
Why wert Thou scourged, why scorned, why crucified ?
Why didst Thou die, why gloriously ascend,
Why send the Comforter, be this the end ?'

Then in a tempest of hot tears her cries
Were drenched and drowned, her wild words washed away ;
Her tears were choked with sobs, sobs swooned to sighs,
Then sighs to silence, and there mute she lay.
Oh, if there be a Heaven beyond the skies,

A Heaven to hear, why was it deaf that day?
 For since time's dawn, unto the realms of air
 No purer heart e'er breathed a purer prayer.

'Rise, my dear child,' a mild voice gravely said,
 'Rise and accept your doom:' whereat she rose.
 'In vain is Reason's dew when Faith is dead,
 And meek Grace sleeps 'neath Doubt's unmelting snows.
 I can no more. The Paraclete hath fled;
 Through his parched heart e'en prayer no longer flows.
 By Heaven may yet the miracle be wrought;
 But human ways are weak, and words are nought.'

Then, lamp in hand, through choir and transept dim
 He led them, till he oped a little door,
 And, having fatherly blessed her and him,
 Closed it, and they beheld his face no more.
 The sky was bright with starry cherubim,
 Silent, and round them was the city's roar;
 And, in their hearts, a human hum and rush,
 O'erawed by heavenly sorrow's solemn hush!

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So once again they fled without delay,
 On wings of wind through leagues of dim-seen land,
 Night and the stars accompanying their way,
 And roar and blackness close on either hand;
 Until the dark drew off, and with the day
 They saw the sparkling bay and joyous strand,
 White sails, brown oars, huge coils of briny ropes,
 And fair proud city throned on regal slopes.

And soon the road they came by, which had run
 Still by the sea, now smooth as woodland pond,
 Saw them once more, love-woven dreams unspun,
 Facing farewell. A little way beyond,
 A sleek brown mule stood blinking in the sun,

For a long march rudely caparisoned ;
And at its side a gentle mountaineer,
Who to their grief lent neither eye nor ear.

‘Hear me once more, Olympia ! Must we part ?
Is Heaven so stern, and can a gentle breast
Inflict, and sooth endure so keen a smart,
When pity’s voice could lull our pain to rest ?
Is there no common Eden of the heart,
Where each fond bosom is a welcome guest ?
No comprehensive Paradise, to hold
All loving souls in one celestial fold ?

‘For Love is older far than all the Gods,
And will survive both Gods and men, and be
The sovran ruler still, when Nature nods,
And the scared stars through misty chaos flee.
Take love away, and we are brutish clods,
Blind, spelling out our fate without the key ;
Belated wanderers stumbling through the night,
Cheered by no gleam of home or hope in sight.

‘But they who in this cold contentious sphere
Deep in their hearts foster Love’s vestal fire,
Can smile at pain, and all that mortals fear,
And tranquil keep when time and death conspire.
Though fickle winds should vex, they do not veer ;
No threats can daunt them, weary waitings tire ;
Their feet are planted on the clouds ; their eyes,
Glare cannot blind, scan the eternal skies.

‘This is my creed, and that the Heaven I seek,
Which even here, Olympia ! may be ours,
Unless my lips, or else thine ears be weak,
Or we have outraged the Supernal Powers.
Oh ! but that cannot be. Would Nature wreak
Her wrath on thee, the tenderest of her flowers ?

The sin, if sin there be, is mine, is mine ;
 Wrong never was, can pain be ever, thine ?

‘Here ’twixt the mountains and the sea I swear,
 That I thy Faith will reverence as thy soul,
 And as on that bright morning when thy fair,
 Entrancing form upon my senses stole,
 Still every dewy dawn fresh gifts will bear
 Unto Madonna’s shrine, that happy goal
 Where our first journey ended, and I fain
 Would have this end, — not snapped, as now, in pain !’

The foam-fringe at their feet was not more white
 Than her pale cheek as, downcast, she replied :
 ‘No, Godfrid ! no ! Farewell, farewell ! You might
 Have been my star ; a star once fell by pride ;
 But since you furl your wings, and veil your light,
 I cling to Mary and Christ crucified.
 Leave me, nay leave me, ere it be too late !
 Better part here than part at Heaven’s gate !’

Thereat he kissed her forehead, she his hand,
 And on the mule he mounted her, and then,
 Along the road that skirts the devious strand,
 Watched her, until she vanished from his ken.
 Tears vainly dropped as water upon sand
 Or words of grace on hearts of hardened men,
 Coursed down her cheeks, while, half her grief divined,
 The mountain guide walked sadly mute behind.

But never more as in the simple days
 When prayer was all her thought, her heart shall be ;
 For she is burdened with the grief that stays,
 And by a shadow vexed that will not flee.
 Pure, but not spared, she passes from our gaze,
 Victim, not vanquisher of Love. And he ?
 Once more a traveller o’er land and main : —
 Ah ! Life is sad, and scarcely worth the pain !

THE DEATH OF GODFRID AND OLYMPIA.

FROM ACT IV.

Too few to guard each passage, and thus ta'en
In rear and flank, the rebel band faced round,
Their one sole thought to slay before being slain,
And with lowered points fired blank across the ground,
At foes that, blind as they, flashed deadly rain
Direct on all their level barrels found
Standing erect; and, when these fell, to glut
Ire too soon fed, made mangled mounds their butt.

And Godfrid had but time, — at last! — to fling
His arms around the form he had loved so well,
Thinking to save, and she to him to cling,
When, 'twixt the madness of the two they fell :
He pierced by ball that fought for faiths of old,
She by their shafts who 'gainst old faiths rebel ;
Albeit so close was this their first, last troth,
One well-aimed bullet would have served for both.

Thus were they found, when, rummaging among
Mixed heaps of slain, the victors came to save
The corpses of their brethren, ere was flung
The refuse in one contumelious grave.
And seeing that one who wore Christ's habit, clung,
Even in death, to form so worldly brave,
They touched them not, but prayed that priest or nun
Would come and say what meet 't were to be done.

Then quickly from the Convent thither sped
The reverend mother, with two daughters dear ;
Who, when she saw this bridal of the dead,
Weeping, commanded, ' Put them on one bier,
And bear them after me with gentle tread.'

And straight she sent for him who many a year
To them had been Heaven's helpmate in that place,
A venerable man, with prayer-lit face.

To him, in hearing of them all, she told
The story she herself had learnt when first,
Six brief weeks gone, Olympia joined their fold,
And next, how Godfrid, aiding her, had nursed
The wounded she with deeper balm consoled;
But from their ears withholding not the worst,—
His strange sad unbelief, which still had kept
The pair apart, till one in death they slept.

The aged pastor, thuswise as she spake,
In silence listened, and then slowly said :
' My children ! These two souls, for Truth's pure sake,
Divided were, since Faith, in him, was dead.
Who knows ? Perchance it did in death awake :
And 't was to save the lost Christ breathed and bled.
Doubt watered by such prayers must somewhere bud;
And see ! he hath the baptism of blood.

' Therefore I dare not say Christ vainly died
Even for him. And since the twain would lie,
Methinks at Spiaggiascura side by side,
Heaven will not earth's infirmity deny.
So let us there one grave for both provide,
In consecrated ground beneath the sky.
She needs no epitaph ; so let his plea,
Dilexit multum, sole inscription be !'

A QUESTION.

LOVE, will thou love me still when wintry streak
Steals on the tresses of autumnal brow ;
When the pale rose hath perished in my cheek,
And those are wrinkles that are dimples now ?

Wilt thou, when this fond arm that here I twine
Round thy dear neck to help thee in thy need,
Droops faint and feeble, and hath need of thine,
Be then my prop, and not a broken reed?
When thou canst only glean along the Past,
And garner in thy heart what Time doth leave,
O, wilt thou then to me, love, cling as fast
As nest of April to December eave;
And, while my beauty dwindles and decays,
Still warm thee by the embers of my gaze?

AN ANSWER.

COME, let us go into the lane, love mine,
And mark and gather what the Autumn grows:
The creamy elder mellowed into wine,
The russet hip that was the pink-white rose;
The amber woodbine into rubies turned,
The blackberry that was the bramble born;
Nor let the seeded clematis be spurned,
Nor pearls, that now are corals, of the thorn.
Look! what a lovely posy we have made
From the wild garden of the waning year.
So when, dear love, your summer is decayed,
Beauty more touching than is clustered here
Will linger in your life, and I shall cling
Closely as now, nor ask if it be Spring.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

FROM 'ATALANTA IN CALYDON.'¹¹

CHORUS.

WHEN the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
 The mother of months in meadow or plain
 Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
 And the brown bright nightingale amorous
 Is half assuaged for Itylus,
 For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
 The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
 Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
 With a noise of winds and many rivers,
 With a clamor of waters, and with might;
 Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
 Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
 For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
 Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
 Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
 O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her
 Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
 For the stars and the winds are unto her
 As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
 For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
 And the south west-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
 And all the season of snows and sins;
 The days dividing lover and lover,
 The light that loses, the night that wins;
 And time remembered is grief forgotten,
 And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
 And in green underwood and cover
 Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
 Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
 The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
 From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
 And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
 And the oat is heard above the lyre,
 And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
 The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
 Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
 Follows with dancing and fills with delight
 The Mænad and the Bassarid;
 And soft as lips that laugh and hide
 The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
 And screen from seeing and leave in sight
 The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
 Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
 The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
 Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
 The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
 But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
 To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
 The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

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THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE.

HERE, where the world is quiet,
 Here, where all trouble seems
 Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
 In doubtful dreams of dreams ;
 I watch the green field growing
 For reaping folk and sowing,
 For harvest-time and mowing,
 A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
 And men that laugh and weep
 Of what may come hereafter
 For men that sow to reap :
 I am weary of days and hours,
 Blown buds of barren flowers,
 Desires and dreams and powers
 And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor ;
 And far from eye or ear
 Wan waves and wet winds labor,
 Weak ships and spirits steer ;
 They drive adrift, and whither
 They wot not who make thither ;
 But no such winds blow hither,
 And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
 No heather-flower or vine,
 But bloomless buds of poppies,
 Green grapes of Proserpine,
 Pale beds of blowing rushes
 Where no leaf blooms or blushes

Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born ;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell ;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes ;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands ;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born ;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn ;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
 The old loves with wearier wings ;
 And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things ;
 Dead dreams of days forsaken,
 Blind buds that snows have shaken,
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure ;
 To-day will die to-morrow ;
 Time stoops to no man's lure ;
 And love, grown faint and fretful,
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
 That no life lives forever ;
 That dead men rise up never ;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light :
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight :
 Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
 Nor days nor things diurnal ;
 Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

MEMORIAL VERSES ON THE DEATH OF
THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.¹²

DEATH, what hast thou to do with me? So saith
Love, with eyes set against the face of Death;
What have I done, O thou strong Death, to thee,
That mine own lips should wither from thy breath?

Though thou be blind as fire or as the sea,
Why should thy waves and storms make war on me?
Is it for hate thou hast to find me fair,
Or for desire to kiss, if it might be,

My very mouth of song, and kill me there?
So with keen rains vexing his crownless hair,
With bright feet bruised from no delightful way,
Through darkness and the disenchanted air,

Lost Love went weeping half a winter's day.
And the armed wind that smote him seemed to say,
How shall the dew live when the dawn is fled,
Or wherefore should the Mayflower outlast May?

Then Death took Love by the right hand, and said,
Smiling: Come now, and look upon thy dead.
But Love cast down the glories of his eyes,
And bowed down like a flower his flowerless head.

And Death spake, saying: What ails thee in such wise,
Being god, to shut thy sight up from the skies?
If thou canst see not, hast thou ears to hear?
Or is thy soul too as a leaf that dies?

Even as he spake with fleshless lips of fear,
But soft as sleep sings in a tired man's ear,
Behold, the winter was not, and its might
Fell, and fruits broke forth of the barren year.

And upon earth was largess of great light,
 And moving music winged for world-wide flight,
 And shapes and sounds of gods beheld and heard,
 And day's foot set upon the neck of night.

And with such song the hollow ways were stirred
 As of a god's heart hidden in a bird,
 Or as the whole soul of the sun in spring
 Should find full utterance in one flower-soft word,

And all the season should break forth and sing
 From one flower's lips, in one rose triumphing ;
 Such breath and light of song as of a flame
 Made ears and spirits of them that heard it ring.

And Love beholding knew not for the same
 The shape that led him, nor in face nor name,
 For he was bright and great of thews and fair,
 And in Love's eyes he was not Death, but Fame.

Not that gray ghost whose life is empty and bare
 And his limbs moulded out of mortal air,
 A cloud of change that shifts into a shower
 And dies and leaves no light for time to wear :

But a god clothed with his own joy and power,
 A god re-risen out of his mortal hour
 Immortal, king and lord of time and space,
 With eyes that look on them as from a tower.

And where he stood the pale sepulchral place
 Bloomed, as new life might in a bloodless face,
 And where men sorrowing came to seek a tomb
 With funeral flowers and tears for grief and grace,

They saw with light as of a world in bloom
 The portal of the House of Fame illume
 The ways of life wherein we toiling tread,
 And watched the darkness as a brand consume.

And through the gates where rule the deathless dead
 The sound of a new singer's soul was shed
 That sang among his kinsfolk, and a beam
 Shot from the star on a new ruler's head,

A new star lighting the Lethean stream,
 A new song mixed into the song supreme
 Made of all souls of singers and their might,
 That makes of life and time and death a dream.

Thy star, thy song, O soul that in our sight
 Wast as a sun that made for man's delight
 Flowers and all fruits in season, being so near
 The sun-god's face, our god that gives us light.

To him of all gods that we love or fear
 Thou among all men by thy name wast dear,
 Dear to the god that gives us spirit of song
 To bind and burn all hearts of men that hear.

The god that makes men's words too sweet and strong
 For life or time or death to do them wrong,
 Who sealed with his thy spirit for a sign
 And filled it with his breath thy whole life long.

Who made thy moist lips fiery with new wine
 Pressed from the grapes of song the sovereign vine,
 And with all love of all things loveliest
 Gave thy soul power to make them more divine.

That thou mightst breathe upon the breathless rest
 Of marble, till the brows and lips and breast
 Felt fall from off them as a cancelled curse
 That speechless sleep wherewith they lived opprest.

Who gave thee strength and heat of spirit to pierce
 All clouds of form and color that disperse,
 And leave the spirit of beauty to remould
 In types of clean chryselephantine verse.

Who gave thee words more golden than fine gold
 To carve in shapes more glorious than of old,
 And build thy songs up in the sight of time
 As statues set in godhead manifold :

In sight and scorn of temporal change and clime
 That meet the sun re-risen with refluent rhyme
 — As god to god might answer face to face —
 From lips whereon the morning strikes sublime.

Dear to the god, our god who gave thee place
 Among the chosen of days, the royal race,
 The lords of light, whose eyes of old and ears
 Saw even on earth and heard him for a space.

There are the souls of those once mortal years
 That wrought with fire of joy and light of tears
 In words divine as deeds that grew thereof
 Such music as he swoons with love who hears.

There are the lives that lighten from above
 Our under lives, the spherulic souls that move
 Through the ancient heaven of song-illuminated air
 Whence we that hear them singing die with love.

There all the crowned Hellenic heads, and there
 The old gods who made men godlike as they were,
 The lyric lips wherefrom all songs take fire,
 Live eyes, and light of Apollonian hair.

There, round the sovereign passion of that lyre
 Which the stars hear, and tremble with desire,
 The ninefold light Pierian is made one
 That here we see divided, and aspire,

Seeing, after this or that crown to be won ;
 But where they hear the singing of the sun,
 All form, all sound, all color, and all thought
 Are as one body and soul in unison.

There the song sung shines as a picture wrought,
The painted mouths sing that on earth say naught,
The carven limbs have sense of blood and growth,
And large-eyed life that seeks nor lacks not aught.

There all the music of thy living mouth
Lives, and all loves wrought of thine hand in youth
And bound about the breasts and brows with gold
And colored pale or dusk from north or south.

Fair living things made to thy will of old,
Born of thy lips, no births of mortal mould,
That in the world of song about thee wait
Where thought and truth are one and manifold.

Within the graven lintels of the gate
That here divides our vision and our fate,
The dreams we walk in and the truths of sleep,
All sense and spirit have life inseparate.

There what one thinks, is his to grasp and keep ;
There are no dreams, but very joys to reap,
No foiled desires that die before delight,
No fears to see across our joys and weep.

There hast thou all thy will of thought and sight,
All hope for harvest, and all heaven for flight ;
The sunrise of whose golden-mouthed glad head
To paler songless ghosts was heat and light.

Here where the sunset of our year is red
Men think of thee as of the summer dead,
Gone forth before the snows, before thy day,
With unshod feet, with brows unchapleted.

Couldst thou not wait till age had wound, they say,
Round those wreathed brows his soft white blossoms ? Nay
Why shouldst thou vex thy soul with this harsh air,
Thy bright-winged soul, once free to take its way ?

Nor for men's reverence hadst thou need to wear
 The holy flower of gray time-hallowed hair;
 Nor were it fit that aught of thee grew old,
 Fair lover all thy days of all things fair.

And hear we not thy words of molten gold
 Singing? or is their light and heat acold
 Whereat men warmed their spirits? Nay, for all
 These yet are with us, ours to hear and hold.

The lovely laughter, the clear tears, the call
 Of love to love on ways where shadows fall,
 Through doors of dim division and disguise,
 And music made of doubts unmusical;

The love that caught strange light from death's own eyes,
 And filled death's lips with fiery words and sighs,
 And half asleep let feed from veins of his
 Her close red warm snake's mouth, Egyptian-wise:

And that great night of love more strange than this,
 When she that made the whole world's bale and bliss
 Made king of the whole world's desire a slave,
 And killed him in mid kingdom with a kiss;

Veiled loves that shifted shapes and shafts, and gave,
 Laughing, strange gifts to hands that durst not crave,
 Flowers double-blossomed, fruits of scent and hue
 Sweet as the bride-bed, stranger than the grave;

All joys and wonders of old lives and new
 That ever in love's shine or shadow grew,
 And all the grief whereof he dreams and grieves,
 And all sweet roots fed on his light and dew;

All these through thee our spirit of sense perceives,
 As threads in the unseen woof thy music weaves,

Birds caught and snared that fill our ears with thee,
Bay-blossoms in thy wreath of brow-bound leaves.

Mixed with the masque of death's old comedy
Though thou too pass, have here our flowers, that we
For all the flowers thou gav'st upon thee shed,
And pass not crownless to Persephone.

Blue lotus-blooms and white and rosy-red
We wind with poppies for thy silent head,
And on this margin of the sundering sea
Leave thy sweet light to rise upon the dead.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN.

IN a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its
roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briers if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.

The thorns he spares when the rose is taken ;
 The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
 The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
 These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls not ;
 As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry ;
 From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,
 Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
 Over the meadows that blossom and wither
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song ;
 Only the sun and the rain come hither
 All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
 Only the wind here hovers and revels
 In a round where life seems barren as death.
 Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
 Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
 Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
 Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, ' Look thither,'
 Did he whisper ? ' Look forth from the flowers to the
 sea ;
 For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,
 And men that love lightly may die — but we ?'
 And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
 And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
 In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
 Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither ?
 And were one to the end — but what end who knows ?
 Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
 As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

MATHILDE BLIND.

FROM 'THE PROPHECY OF ST. ORAN.' 13

.
 'A CURSE is on this work!' Columba cried;
 And with their dark robes flapping in the gale,
 The frightened monks came hurrying to his side,
 And looked at one another turning pale;
 For every night the work done in the day
 Strewn on the ground in wild confusion lay.

'A curse is on this work!' he cried again
 As his keen glances swept each face in turn:
 'Behold, God smites us in the hurricane,
 And in the lightning doth His anger burn.
 Brethren, some secret deadly sin there is
 Known to the Lord for which we suffer this.

.
 'The Lord rebukes us in His wrath! I ask,
 Again I ask, what man among you all
 Living in deadly sin, yet wears the mask
 Of sanctity? Yea, let him cleanse his soul,
 Confessing all the crying guilt of it,
 Or go for ever to the burning pit!'

Again his eagle glances swept each face,
 While the assembled monks, with anxious sigh,
 Asked with a thrill of horror and amaze,
 'Was it indeed a judgment from on high?'

As with one voice then cried the saintly throng,
'Not I — not I — know of that hidden wrong.'

And with uplifted arms they loudly prayed,
'Oh Lord, if in our midst the traitor bides
Who breaks the sacramental vow he made,
And takes Thy name in vain, and basely hides
His wicked ways from every eye save Thine —
Let his dark sin stand forth, and make a sign.'

All day expectant, waiting on His will,
The monks in reverential silence stand
Beneath the rustling pine-trees of the hill,
Whence their eyes sweep across the level land :
Lo, from afar the vision of a maid
Comes o'er the shining pools the flood has made.

.
Then in their midst all breathless did she stand,
But paused bewildered and as one affrayed, —
Even as a swift wave making for the strand
With all its waters gathering to a head
Delays, suspended with back-fluttering locks,
Then breaks in showers of brine upon the rocks.

So for a moment motionless she stood,
From monk to monk her wildered glances stray ;
Immovable, like figures carved in wood,
These waited what their master's lips would say,
But ever and anon, in mute appeal,
Her piteous eyes to Oran's face would steal.

Only for one brief moment she delayed,
Struck speechless at his cold averted mien,
Then with a long low moan she blindly swayed
With her fair arms towards him, and in keen
Unutterable anguish cried aghast —
'Is this a dream, or am I mad at last ?

‘Dost thou not know me, Oran — Oran mine ?
 Look on me ; I am Mona, I am she
 For whom thy soul so thirstily did pine !
 Nay, turn not from me ! Say, art thou not he
 Whose mouth to my mouth yearningly was pressed,
 Whose dearest head lay pillowed on my breast ?

‘Dear, be not wroth with me in that I came ;
 For our love’s sake look not so stern and grave ;
 Ah, surely thou wilt think me free from blame
 For having dared to break the word I gave,
 When I have told thee what has brought me here,
 How sore distraught I was with grief and fear.

‘Oh love, when night came swooping o’er the sea,
 And on the poor folk’s tired eyelids sleep
 Fell like a seabird’s feather, stealthily
 I climbed the jagged overhanging steep
 Whose giddy summit looks towards thy home,
 Wondering if haply I might see thee come.

‘When, lo ! the solid cliff began to shake
 As in an ague fit, and while I stood
 Trembling, methought the maddening sea would break
 Its everlasting limits, for the flood
 Came crashing in loud thunder o’er the land,
 And swept our huts like seaweed from the sand.

‘Then a great horror seized me, and I reeled
 And fell upon my face, and knew no more.
 When from that trance I woke, the sun had wheeled
 Far up the sky and shone upon the shore,
 And there beneath the bright and cloudless sky
 I saw a heap of mangled corpses lie.

‘Shrieking I fled, and paused not in my fright
 Fleeing I knew not whither, but my feet

Flew swift as ever arrow in its flight
To thee, my love ! Hast thou no smile to greet
Thy Mona with, — no kiss ? For pity's sake,
Speak to me, Oran, or my heart will break.'

All held their breath when she had made her moan :
All eyes were fixed on that pale monk, who stood
Unnaturally quiet — like a stone
Whose flinty sides are fretted by the flood —
When St. Columba turned on him, and said,
' I bid thee speak, — man, knowest thou this maid ? '

Then answered him the other, but his words
Rang hollow like the toll of funeral bell,
And on his humid brows like knotted cords
The livid veins and arteries seemed to swell,
Facing the accusation of his eyes,
' Master, I know her not — the woman lies ! '

A hum of indignation, doubt, alarm,
Ran through their circle, but none durst to speak
Before the Master, who with lifted arm
And eyes whence fiery flashes seemed to break,
Cried very loudly, ' Is it even so, —
Then help me God but I will rout this foe !

' Look, brethren, on this lovely maiden, fair
As virginal white lilies newly blown,
Fresh as the first breath of the vernal air,
Pure as an incarnation of the dawn ;
Look on that golden glory of her hair, —
It is a man-trap, Satan's deadliest snare.

' Brethren, let the two eldest of you seize
This fiend in angel's garb, this beast of prey
Which lies in wait behind that snowy fleece
Lusting to take our brother's name away,
And blast his fame for purest sanctity
With lies forged by our common enemy !

'Seize her, and bear her to that frightful steep
Where, bristling with hugh pier and jagged spire,
The spectre rock which overhangs the deep
Pierces the ghastly clouds like frozen fire ;
There standing, fling her from its giddiest cone —
Into the ocean fling her, like a stone.'

The sentence had gone forth ; the monks obeyed ;
Two venerable brothers, deep in years,
First crossed themselves, then seized the struggling maid
In their stout arms ; despite her prayers and tears,
And wild appeals on him she called her love,
They with their burden now began to move.

But he, whose human flesh seemed petrified
To marble, started from that rigid mood,
And blindly running after them, he cried,
'Hold ! hold ! stain not your hands with innocent blood ;
I broke my vow, I am the sinner, I
Seduced the maid, — spare her, and let me die.'

They halted midway, marvelling, aghast,
When St. Columba thundered to them 'Stay !'
His voice was like a dreadful battle-blast,
And startled coveys rose and whirred away :
'He broke his vow, he is the sinner ; aye
Do as he says — spare her, and let him die !

'Yea, well I saw the gnawing worm within,
But wished to tear the mask from off his soul,
That in the naked hideousness of sin
He might stand pilloried before you all :
This is a judgment on me from above
For loving him with more than woman's love.'

His voice here failed him and he hid his face ;
And as before some imminent storm all sound

In earth, air, ocean ceases for a space,
 There fell a breathless silence on that mound ;
 But when Columba raised his voice once more,
 It seemed the muffled thunder's boding roar.

'Oh perjured one ! oh breaker of thy vow !
 Oh base, apostate monk, whose guilt abhorred
 Weighed down our walls and laid our chapel low !
 Thy life shall be an offering to the Lord,
 And with thy blood we will cement the fane
 Which for thy sin's sake still was built in vain.

'Seize him, and bear him to that dolorous site
 Where mid our ruined cells the chapel stands
 Whose holy walls and columns every night
 Have fallen beneath the blow of dæmon hands ;
 There, living, bury him beneath its sod,
 And so propitiate the Lord our God.'

.

Three days, three nights have fled since in that spot,
 Where fiends and dæmons revelled unforbid,
 They buried that false monk who was a blot
 Upon their rule : but since the earth has hid
 His bones accursed, God's sun has shone again,
 Nor has fresh ill assailed their prospering fane,

Which now they enter, singing hymns of praise,
 Columba at their head — when lo, behold
 The grave yawns open and a bloodless face,
 The face of him they knew, rose from the mould :
 Slowly he rose from the incumbent clay
 Lifting the white shroud in the moonlight gray.

Slowly his arm beneath the winding-sheet
 He waved three times, as though to bid them hear ;
 Then in the moonlight rose he to his feet
 Showing his shrunken body, and his sere

Discolored hair, and smouldering eyes that lie
Sunk in their sockets, glaring hot and dry.

Slowly he raised his voice — once rich in tone
Like sweetest music, now a mournful knell
With dull sepulchral sounds, as of a stone
Cast down into a black unfathomed well —
And murmured, ‘ Lo, I come back from the grave, —
Behold, there is no God to smite or save.

‘ Poor fools ! wild dreamers ! No, there is no God ;
Yon heaven is deaf and dumb to prayer and praise ;
Lo, no almighty tyrant wields the rod
For evermore above our hapless race ;
Nor fashioned us, frail creatures that we be,
To bear the burden of eternity.

‘ Hear it, self-torturing monks, and cease to wage
Your mad, delirious, suicidal war ;
There is no devil who from age to age
Waylays and tempts all souls of men that are ;
For ever seeking whom he may devour,
And damn with wine and woman, gold and power.

‘ Deluded priests, ye think the world a snare,
Denouncing every tender human tie !
Behold, your heaven is unsubstantial air,
Your future bliss a sick brain’s phantasy ;
There is no room amid the stars which gem
The firmament for your Jerusalem.

‘ Rejoice, poor sinners, for I come to tell
To you who hardly dare to live for fright ;
There is no burning everlasting hell
Where souls shall be tormented day and night :
The fever ye call life ends with your breath ;
All weary souls set in the night of death.

‘Then let your life on earth be life indeed !
Nor drop the substance, snatching at a shade !
Ye can have Eden here ! ye bear the seed ·
Of all the hells and heavens and gods ye made
Within that mighty world-transforming thought
Which permeates the universe it wrought —

‘Wrought out of stones and plants and birds and beasts,
To flower in man, and know itself at last :
Around, about you, see what endless feasts
The spring and summer bountifully cast !
“A vale of tears,” ye cry — if ye were wise,
The earth itself would change to Paradise.

‘The earth itself — the old despised earth,
Would render back your love a thousandfold,
Nor yet afflict the sons of men with dearth,
Disease, and misery, and drought and cold ;
If you would seek a blessing in her sod,
Instead of crying vainly on your God.

‘Cast down the crucifix, take up the plough !
Nor waste your breath which is the life in prayer !
Dare to be men, and break your impious vow,
Nor fly from woman as the devil’s snare !
For if within, around, beneath, above
There is a living God, that God is Love.’

‘The fool says in his heart, There is no God,’
Cried St. Columba, white with Christian ire.
‘Seize Oran, re-inter him in the sod
And may his soul awake in endless fire :
Earth on his mouth — the earth he would adore,
That his blaspheming tongue may blab no more.’

Then like swart ravens swooping on their prey
These monks rushed upon Oran ; when there came

One gliding towards them in wild disarray
 With hair that streamed behind her like a flame
 And face dazed with the moon, who shrilly cried,
 'Let not death part the bridegroom from his bride.'

But deeming her some fiend in female guise,
 They drive her forth with threats, till, crazed with fear,
 Across the stones and mounded graves she flies
 Towards that lapping, moon-illuminated mere ;
 And like a child seeking its mother's breast
 She casts her life thereon, and is at rest.

And while the waves close gurgling o'er her head,
 A grave is dug whence he may never stray,
 Or come back prophesying from the dead, —
 All shouting as they stifle him with clay :
 'Earth on his mouth — the earth he would adore,
 That his blaspheming tongue may blab no more.'

THE STREET-CHILDREN'S DANCE.

Now the earth in fields and hills
 Stirs with pulses of the Spring,
 Nest-embowering hedges ring
 With interminable trills ;
 Sunlight runs a race with rain,
 All the world grows young again.

Young as at the hour of birth :
 From the grass the daisies rise
 With the dew upon their eyes,
 Sun-awakened eyes of earth ;
 Fields are set with cups of gold ;
 Can this budding world grow old ?

Can the world grow old and sere,
 Now when ruddy-tasselled trees

Stoop to every passing breeze,
Rustling in their silken gear;
Now when blossoms pink and white
Have their own terrestrial light?

Brooding light falls soft and warm,
Where in many a wind-rocked nest,
Curled up 'neath the she-bird's breast,
Clustering eggs are hid from harm;
While the mellow-throated thrush
Warbles in the purpling bush.

Misty purple bathes the Spring;
Swallows flashing here and there
Float and dive on waves of air,
And make love upon the wing;
Crocus-buds in sheaths of gold
Burst like sunbeams from the mould.

Chestnut leaflets burst their buds,
Perching tiptoe on each spray,
Springing towards the radiant day,
As the bland, pacific floods
Of the generative sun
All the teeming earth o'errun.

Can this earth run o'er with beauty,
Laugh through leaf and flower and grain,
While in close-pent court and lane,
In the air so thick and sooty,
Little ones pace to and fro,
Weighted with their parents' woe?

Woe-predestined little ones!
Putting forth their buds of life
In an atmosphere of strife,
And crime breeding ignorance;

Where the bitter surge of care
Freezes to a dull despair.

Dull despair and misery
Lie about them from their birth;
Ugly curses, uglier mirth,
Are their earliest lullaby;
Fathers have they without name,
Mothers crushed by want and shame.

Brutish, overburthened mothers,
With their hungry children cast
Half-nude to the nipping blast;
Little sisters with their brothers
Dragging in their arms all day
Children nigh as big as they.

Children mothered by the street:
Shouting, flouting, roaring after
Passers-by with gibes and laughter,
Diving between horses' feet,
In and out of drays and barrows,
Recklessly, like London sparrows.

Mudlarks of our slums and alleys,
All unconscious of the blooming
World behind those housetops looming,
Of the happy fields and valleys,
Of the miracle of Spring
With its boundless blossoming.

Blossoms of humanity!
Poor soiled blossoms in the dust!
Through the thick defiling crust
Of soul-stifling poverty,
In your features may be traced
Childhood's beauty half-effaced—

Childhood, stunted in the shadow
Of the light-debarring walls :
Not for you the cuckoo calls
O'er the silver-threaded meadow ;
Not for you the lark on high
Pours his music from the sky.

Ah ! you have your music too !
And come flocking round that player
Grinding at his organ there,
Summer-eyed and swart of hue,
Rattling off his well-worn tune
On this April afternoon.

Lovely April lights of pleasure
Flit o'er want-beclouded features
Of these little outcast creatures,
As they swing with rhythmic measure,
In the courage of their rags,
Lightly o'er the slippery flags.

Little footfalls, lightly glancing
In a luxury of motion,
Supple as the waves of ocean
In your elemental dancing,
How you fly, and wheel, and spin,
For your hearts too dance within.

Dance along with mirth and laughter,
Buoyant, fearless, and elate,
Dancing in the teeth of fate,
Ignorant of your hereafter
That with all its tragic glooms
Blindly on your future looms.

Past and future, hence away !
Joy, diffused throughout the earth,

Centre in this moment's mirth
 Of ecstatic holiday:
 Once in all their lives' dark story,
 Touch them, Fate! with April glory.

THE DEAD.

THE dead abide with us! Though stark and cold
 Earth seems to grip them, they are with us still:
 They have forged our chains of being for good or ill;
 And their invisible hands these hands yet hold.
 Our perishable bodies are the mould
 In which their strong imperishable will —
 Mortality's deep yearning to fulfil —
 Hath grown incorporate through dim time untold.

Vibrations infinite of life in death,
 As a star's travelling light survives its star!
 So may we hold our lives, that when we are
 The fate of those who then will draw this breath,
 They shall not drag us to their judgment bar,
 And curse the heritage which we bequeath.

SEBASTIAN EVANS.

ARNAUD DE MERVEIL.

AT THE ABBEY GATE.

MAY I not sing, then? Do I ask too much?
Pray you, forgive me, Father! Yet I ween
No longer since than summer I could touch
My citole to a tune could charm a queen
To hear and crown me for the lays I wove:
Though well I wot, the tune of 'Time hath been,'
Fair Father Abbot, hath less might to move. —
Yea, steel is strong, and gold more strong than steel,
And love than gold, and art more strong than love,
Yet 't is not strongest! Nay, I live to feel
That a king's envy is more strong than art. —
We, — I and King Alfonso of Castile,
Were lovers of one lady — wherefore start?
I am a homeless waif, and only claim
A few hours' house-room for a broken heart:
Yet, Father, 'tis of right I set my name
Where she hath set my love — before the king's;
For I am Arnaud de Merveil, — the same,
If aught remain the same of earthly things,
The same, none other — though I walk forlorn
And even the uplandish yeoman slights the strings
That shook five kingdoms now my robes are torn,
And deems a groat too lavish for my lay.
Father, I fain would rest me here till morn,

Being faint and footsore: pray you, let me stay!
 By Him the Wandering Jew forbade to rest,
 Send me not forth this night upon my way!
 I crave no largess save to be your guest
 For this one night — unless it be the prayer
 Of these pure brethren for a soul distressed. —
 I will requite you: — Mine are lays more rare
 Than Bertrand ever babbled — Tush! I boast
 And am a beggar! — Yet if thou canst spare
 One half-hour from devotion, good mine host,
 And these fair brethren — who perchance have strayed
 No farther from the cloister than the coast,
 And less are wont in gallant masquerade
 Of courts and camps than thou and I to stand —
 Will deign to hear such music as I made,
 I will essay a tale could once command
 The ears of queens and kings in hall and bower —
 Ho, boy, there! Give the citole to my hand!

Once, I remember, by the Garden Tower
 Were three king's daughters playing at the ball;
 I crossed the lawn, and plucked a lily-flower
 And waved it as I strode. They knew the call
 And followed, laughing: one had slipped her shoe
 And stayed to right it nigh the pleasaunce wall.

Then sang I how a king's son went to woo
 The Lady of the Waste Lands by the Sea,
 Unweeting of the weird whereby she threw
 Each morn her womanhood aside, to be
 Till evening glimmered over brake and thorn,
 A milk-white hind under the greenwood tree.
 And all a summer day with hound and horn
 By ford and fell he chased that spotless hide;
 Till, smit by shaft too sure, his love forlorn
 Fled to a wild cell by the wailing tide

Mid spiky grass half-buried in the sand,
Where, peering through the casement-chink, he spied
A weeping breathless maiden, her right hand
Stanching an arrow-hurt on her round arm :
And in the sundown of that dreary strand,
Knew her he loved, and how he had wrought her harm,
And, shamed to threefold fondness by the feat,
Kissed her the kiss that snapped the baleful charm.
And then I sang them how a rustling fleet
Of cygnets sailing from the Norland fords
Stooped on a mountain mere one May day sweet,
Where, with a chanted charming of strange words,
The swan-skins fell from their white womanhood
Among the sunlit shallows. Then with swords
Men came to slay them, but the wailing brood
Donned once again their feathers and were gone
Into the sky, far from those men of blood,
Back to their Norland homestead — all save one,
That lost her swan-gear in the treacherous reeds,
And she so fair, so pitiful, that none
Of those rude sworders, swift to murderous deeds,
But fain would bear her to his town as bride.
And in their hearts, like wind among the gledes,
Love kindled wrath, and even from undern-tide,
Each fought on other till the sun was low :
And one alone among his peers who died
Was left to woo that Sister of the Snow.
And thus they wedded : — but upon a day
The swans again came sailing all arow,
And when they brought her wings to flee away,
There was no charm in love's sweet fellowships,
No kiss of spouse nor babe could bid her stay.
Then would I tell of one on haws and hips
Starving among the woods, an Outlaw bold,
To whom, the word sans pardon on his lips,
The fiend, Dame Venus, proffered wealth untold,

And fame and love at night to meet her there :

Withal she gave him drink from cups of gold,
And loosed a token from her golden hair :

He swore, but laughing at the oath he swore,
She turned and shrank into the wintry air.

And lo, at midnight, through the forest hoar,
When the dead walk and the sick moonbeam dims,

He came — but found the trysting-glade no more,
No more, no more ! Din of unhallowed hymns

He heard, and once among the groaning trees
That blinding beauty, those majestic limbs

Flashed for a moment — then, like surging seas,
A rout of huntsmen not of earth swept past ;

And in the morn, footing the peaceful leas,
The whistling charcoal-burner stopped aghast,
Stumbling upon a corpse — and straightway knew
What doom had dawned on that fond youth at last.

Yea, but the song my singing made all true
What time I summered by the sea i' the South

Last June, was that which silenced me and slew.
'T was of a Princess, one in all men's mouth,

Fair Rosiphel — no rose so fair to see
In a queen's garden blooming after drouth —

The widowed king's one child of Armenye.
Yet, flower albeit of peerless maidenhood,

For wealth, wit, wisdom, worth and sovereignty,
A world to woo her, would she not be wooed.

Heiress of all things save a heart to move,
As if there ran no woman in her blood,

All love she loved save love alone of love.
Never was peer nor prince nor duke nor king

Might win such grace as even wear her glove
For token on his crest knight-erranting,

Yea, though he spent a realm for such a meed,
And all the treasure East or West could bring.

Coldly she bade her wooers all God-speed,

As if too careless or to smile or scorn :
Let lovers live or die she took no heed,
But loved, feared, hated none of woman born.
She recked not, she ! One kingly-sceptred knight,
Who for her sake full oft had watched till morn,
Sought him a death more kindly in the fight :
'All die,' she said: 'we, too, would fighting die' —
And went her ways and loved her own delight,
Daring love's noonday sun with phœnix-eye.

Till on a Springtide as she went a-Maying,
Joyous among her joyous company,
With singing, dancing, laughter and sweet playing
Some deal aweary, to a greenwood glade
Beside a brook she loitered, lonely straying
To rest her in the pleasaunce of the shade.
And at her feet she saw the bells of Spring,
And overhead horse-chestnut leaves that played
With open hands, and buffeted the wing
O' the warm May wind come wooing through the shaw.
And ever among she heard the mavis sing
Loud to his mate how Love is lord and law,
And cushats coo how Love will woo by kind :
And proud beneath the forest oaks she saw
The red deer royal-antlered by his hind,
And o'er his pastures green the moody bull
With muttered thunder tramping forth to find
His silky-dewlapped mate beside the pool.
Yea, all the Spring had blossomed in her veins
Ere on her eyne a show more beautiful
Than Springtide's self among those greenwood lanes
Dawned on a sudden. Lo, by twos and threes
On palfreys ambling gay with tasselled manes
And housings pranked with needled broideries,
Rode forth a bevy of fair dames, more fair
Than all king's daughters in all palaces :—

So lovesome all, so queenly debonair,
 She clean forgot to greet them ere they passed,
 And only woke to wonder what they were
 Who o'er the greensward rode so proud and fast,
 In state so royal and so rich array,
 All red-rose-garlanded from first to last,
 With kirtles rose and white of costliest say
 And copes of damasked green, all clad the same
 To glove, and boot, and girdle glistening gay.

But while she marvelled, lo, another dame,
 In tattered russet weed unseemly rent
 And loose locks crownless through the greenwood came
 Spurring a gaunt-ribbed jennet, as if bent
 To follow that fair cavalcade in haste.

Wan was her face, and even as she went
 A coil of halters dangled at her waist ;
 Yet, stranger still than all that went before,
 A golden bridle, rough with gem-work, graced
 The golden bit her spavined stumbler bore.

Kindly, as one who could of courtesy,
 The Princess spake : ' Nay, spur not on so sore,
 Sweet sister mine : no robbers' nest is nigh.

But prithee tell what be these dames so fair
 Who ride our valleys in such sovereignty ? '

That other answered : ' These be they that bare
 Spotless their maiden fame and wedded troth :

Who read aright their womanhood and sware
 To Love our Lord and King the holy oath. —

Farewell, sweet friend : — my service calls me hence.'
 ' Nay, sister,' quoth the Princess ; ' we were loth

To lose thee thus, not knowing whom nor whence.
 Gentle thou art, if I can read aright,

And by thy seeming void of all offence :
 What chance hath brought thee to this sorry plight ?
 What be these halters ? What thy service due ? '

'Fair friend,' she said, 'I, ere I left the light,
Was Princess of Cathay and Cambalu :
But I was slow to learn Love's kindly lore :
Nothing I recked of tender hearts and true,
But mateless aye my maiden chaplet wore :
Therefore in this ungentle guise I ride,
Meet penance of ungentle crime of yore,
And mourn in death too late my living pride.
And when these ladies in the lusty May
Troop proudly forth upon the greenwood side
To listen to the sweet birds' roundelay
And from the Springtide quaff fresh loveliness,
I in these tatters follow their array
To hold their stirrups and their steeds to dress,
And bear, for Love our Lord decreed the doom,
These halters as their humble hostleress.'

'Doth Love wreak vengeance then beyond the tomb?'
The Princess mused, but said : 'I prithee tell
Why bears thy beast this bridle, or for whom?'
With that the damsel blushed, and a tear fell.
'Madam,' she said : 'one fortnight ere my death
I 'gan repent me that I did rebel
So long 'gainst Him who giveth all things breath.
There was a Minstrel in my father's hall,
Around whose brow full oft I had twined a wreath
More kingly than the king's own coronal
For braver words and kinglier than the king's,
And deeds as kingly in the tilt withal.
Yet never, till his hand upon the strings
● Waxed faint, and faint the voice that sang so sweet,
And o'er him fell the shadow of the wings
So soon to bear him where no pulses beat,
Did I begin to love him, or to know
'T was mine own crime had woven his winding-sheet.
But when within the fortnight he lay low,

I bade them bury me, who wrought such ill,
Beside him in the grave — and died even so.

Wherefore hath Love our Lord, who knew my will,
And that my love, though late, was very truth,
Granted me thus to ride by holt and hill ;

And gave for guerdon of my tardy ruth
This starry bridle which is all my weal.

Farewell ! To Love give offering of thy youth !'

So rode she forth, and vanished : ' Lo, I kneel,
Love, Lord, before thee, thine unworthiest slave.'

The Princess prayed, ' Lord, grant me now thy heal,
So may I bear no halters in the grave !'

Such lay I sang last year, and one who heard,
No longer infidel to true-love, gave

To him who sang the lay her plighted word : —
Yseult de Beziers — Father mine, dost hear ?

I say Yseult de Beziers hath preferred
Myself the Minstrel, or to prince or peer !

Yea, King Alfonso of Castile in vain
Whispered his witless wooings in her ear,

And vowed her half the palaces of Spain !
But kings are strong and cruel ! He, this king,

Would give Navarre to-day to have me slain !
But durst not slay me ! Look, this topaz ring

She bade him send in token he hath sworn
To harm me not nor kill, where'er I sing,

So nevermore I risk me to return
Within his marches nor nine leagues anear,

But dwell within the land where I was born —
She is Alfonso's love, and I — am here !

EDMUND WILLIAM GOSSE.

FROM 'FIRDAUSI IN EXILE.'¹⁴

.
At last one night, as lone Firdausi rode,
The dawn broke gray across the starry sky,
And far ahead behind the mountains flowed
A sudden gush of molten gold on high;
The glory spread from snowy horn to horn,
Tinged by the rushing dawn with sanguine dye,
And Tous, the little town where he was born,
Flashed at his feet, with white roofs clustered nigh.

His aged sister fell upon his neck;
His girl, his only child, with happy tears,
Clung to his knees, and sobbing, with no check
Poured out the story of her hopes and fears.
Gravely his servants gave him welcome meet,
And when his coming reached the townfolk's ears
They ran to cluster round him in the street,
And gave him honor for his wealth of years.

And there in peace he waited for the end;
But in all distant lands where Mahmoud sent,
Each Prince and Sultan was Firdausi's friend,
And murmured, like a high-stringed instrument
Swept by harsh fingers, at a quest so rude,
And chid the zeal, austere and violent,
That drove so sweet a voice to solitude,
And bade the Shah consider and relent.

And once from Delhi, that o'erhangs the tide
 Of reedy Ganges like a gorgeous cloud,
 The Hindu king, with Persia close allied,
 Sent letters larger than the faith he vowed,
 Smelling of sandalwood and ambergris,
 And cited from Firdausi lines that showed
 Friendship should be eternal, and the bliss
 Of love a gift to make a master proud.

So while these words were fresh in Mahmoud's brain
 He went one night into the mosque to pray,
 And by the swinging lamp deciphered plain
 The verse Firdausi, ere he fled away,
 Wrote on the wall ; and one by one there rose
 Sad thoughts and sweet of many a vanished day,
 When his soul hovered on the measured close
 And wave-beat of the rich heroic lay.

Mourning the verse, he mourned the poet too ;
 And he who oftentimes had lain awake
 Long nights in wide-eyed vision to pursue
 His victim, yearning in revengeful ache,
 Forgot all dreams of a luxurious death
 By trampling elephant or strangling snake,
 And thought on his old friend with tightened breath,
 And flushed, remorseful for his anger's sake.

Back to his court he went, molten at heart,
 And all his rage on faithless Hasan turned ;
 For when he thought him of that tongue's black art,
 His wrath was in him like a coal that burned ;
 He bade his several ministers appear
 Before his throne, and by inquiry learned
 The cunning treason of the false vizier,
 And all his soul's deformity discerned.

Hasan was slain that night ; and of the gold
His monkey-hands had thieved from rich and poor,
The Sultan bade the money should be told
Long due as payment at Firdausi's door ;
But when the sacks of red dinars were full,
Mahmoud bethought him long, and pondered sore,
Since vainly any king is bountiful
Not knowing where to seek his creditor.

But while he fretted at this ignorance,
A dervish came to Ghaznin, who had seen,
In passing through the streets of Tous, by chance
Firdausi in his garden cool and green ;
At this Mahmoud rejoiced, and, with glad eyes
Swimming in tears, quivering with liquid sheen,
Wrote words of pardon, and in welcoming wise
Prayed all might be again as all had been.

But while Firdausi brooded on his wrong,
One day he heard a child's clear voice repeat
The bitter jibe of his own scathing song ;
Whereat he started, and his full heart beat
Its last deep throb of agony and rage ;
And blinded in sharp pain, with tottering feet,
Being very feeble in extremest age,
He fell, and died there in the crowded street.

The light of three-and-fourscore summers' suns
Had blanched the silken locks round that vast brow ;
If Mahmoud might have looked upon him once,
He would have bowed before him meek and low ;
The majesty of death was in his face,
And those wide waxen temples seemed to glow
With morning glory from some holy place
Where angels met him in a burning row.

His work was done; the palaces of kings
 Fade in long rains, and in loud earthquakes fall;
 The poem that a godlike poet sings
 Shines o'er his memory like a brazen wall;
 No suns may blast it, and no tempest wreck,
 Its periods ring above the trumpet's call,
 Wars and the tumult of the sword may shake,
 And may eclipse it — it survives them all.

Now all this while along the mountain road
 The mighty line of camels wound in state;
 Shuddering they moved beneath their massy load,
 And swinging slowly with the balanced weight;
 Burden of gold, and garments red as flame,
 They bore, not dreaming of the stroke of fate,
 And so at last one day to Tous they came
 And entered blithely at the eastern gate.

But in the thronged and noiseless streets they found
 All mute, and marvelled at the tears men shed,
 And no one asked them whither they were bound,
 And when, for very shame discomfited,
 They cried, 'Now tell us where Firdausi lies!'
 A young man like a cypress rose and said —
 The anger burning in his large dark eyes —
 'Too late Mahmoud remembers! He is dead!

'Speed! haste away! hie to the western port;
 Perhaps the convoy has not passed it yet!
 But hasten, hasten, for the hour is short,
 And your short-memoried master may forget!
 Behold, they bear Firdausi to the tomb,
 Pour in his open grave your golden debt!
 Speed! haste! and with the treasures of the loom
 Dry the sad cheeks where filial tears are wet.

‘Lead your bright-harnessed camels one by one,
The dead man journeys, and he fain would ride ;
Pour out your unctuous perfumes in the sun,
The rose has spilt her petals at his side ;
Your citherns and your carven rebecks hold
Here when the nightingale untimely died,
And ye have waited well till he is cold,
Now wrap his body in your tigers’ hide.’

And so the young man ceased ; but one arose
Of graver aspect, not less sad than he.
‘Nay, let,’ he cried, ‘the sunshine and the snows
His glittering gold and silk-soft raiment be ;
Approach not with unhallowed steps profane
The low white wall, the shadowy lotus-tree ;
Nor let a music louder than the rain
Disturb him dreaming through eternity.

‘For him no more the dawn will break in blood,
No more the silver moon bring fear by night ;
He starts no longer at a tyrant’s mood,
Serene for ever in the Prophet’s sight ;
The soul of Yaman breathed on him from heaven,
And he is victor in the unequal fight ;
To Mahmoud rage and deep remorse are given,
To old Firdausi rest and long delight.’

THE RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS.

‘OUT in the meadows the young grass springs,
Shivering with sap,’ said the larks, ‘and we
Shoot into air with our strong young wings,
Spirally up over level and lea ;
Come, O Swallows, and fly with us
Now that horizons are luminous !
Evening and morning the world of light,
Spreading and kindling, is infinite !’

Far away, by the sea in the south,
 The hills of olive and slopes of fern
 Whiten and glow in the sun's long drouth,
 Under the heavens that beam and burn ;
 And all the swallows were gathered there
 Flitting about in the fragrant air,
 And heard no sound from the larks, but flew
 Flashing under the blinding blue.

Out of the depths of their soft rich throats
 Languidly fluted the thrushes, and said :
 'Musical thought in the mild air floats,
 Spring is coming and winter is dead !
 Come, O Swallows, and stir the air,
 For the buds are all bursting unaware,
 And the drooping eaves and the elm-trees long
 To hear the sound of your low sweet song.'

Over the roofs of the white Algiers,
 Flashingly shadowing the bright bazaar,
 Flitted the swallows, and not one hears
 The call of the thrushes from far, from far ;
 Sighed the thrushes ; then, all at once,
 Broke out singing the old sweet tones,
 Singing the bridal of sap and shoot,
 The tree's slow life between root and fruit.

But just when the dingles of April flowers
 Shine with the earliest daffodils,
 When, before sunrise, the cold clear hours
 Gleam with a promise that noon fulfils, —
 Deep in the leafage the cuckoo cried,
 Perched on a spray by a rivulet-side,
 Swallows, O Swallows, come back again
 To swoop and herald the April rain.

And something awoke in the slumbering heart
Of the alien birds in their African air,
And they paused, and alighted, and twittered apart,
And met in the broad white dreamy square,
And the sad slave woman, who lifted up
From the fountain her broad-lipped earthen cup,
Said to herself, with a weary sigh,
'To-morrow the swallows will northward fly !'

THE APOTHEOSIS OF ST. DOROTHY.

A MAIDEN wandering from the east,
A saint immaculately white,
I saw in holy dream last night,
Who rode upon a milk-white beast ;
Across the woods her shadow fell,
And wrought a strange and silent spell,
A miracle.

With firm-set eyes, and changeless face,
She passed the cities, one by one ;
Her hair was colored like the sun,
And shed a glory round the place
Where'er she came, she was so fair
That men fell down and worshipped there
In silent prayer.

And ever in her sacred hands
She bore a quaintly carven pyx
Of serpentine and sardonyx,
The wonder of those eastern lands ;
Wherein were laid preserved in myrrh,
The gifts of vase and thurifer
She bore with her.

And after many days she came
To that high mountain, where are built

The towers of Sarras, carved and gilt
 And fashioned like their spires of flame :
 Then like a traveller coming home,
 She let her mild-eyed palfrey roam,
 And upward clomb.

Oh ! then methought the turrets rang
 With shouting joyous multitudes,
 And through the tumult, interludes
 Of choral hosts, that played and sang ;
 Such welcome, since the world hath been,
 To singer, prophetess or queen,
 Was never seen.

The golden gates were opened wide ;
 The city seemed a lake of light,
 For chrysopras and chrysolite
 Were wrought for walls on every side ;
 Without the town was meet for war,
 But inwardly each bolt and bar
 Shone like a star.

Then, while I wondered, all the sky
 Above the city broke in light,
 And opened to my startled sight
 The heavens immeasurably high,
 A glorious effluence of air,
 And shining ether, pure and rare,
 Divinely fair.

And, rising up amid the spires,
 I saw the saintly maiden go,
 In splendor like new-fallen snow,
 That robs the sun-rise of its fires ;
 So pure, so beautiful she was,
 And rose like vapory clouds that pass
 From dewy grass.

Between her hands, the pyx of gold
She held up like an offering sent
To Him, who holds the firmament
And made the starry world of old;
It glimmered like the golden star
That shines on Christmas eve afar,
Where shepherds are.

And clouds of angels, choir on choir,
Bowed out of heaven to welcome her,
And poured upon her nard and myrrh,
And bathed her forehead in white fire,
And waved in air their gracious wings,
And smote their kindling viol-strings
In choral rings.

But she, like one who swoons and sees
‘A vision just before he dies,
With quivering lips and lustrous eyes
Gazed up the shining distances;
But soon the angels led her on
Where fiercer cloudy splendor shone,
And she was gone.

And then a voice cried : — ‘ This is she
Who through great tribulation trod
A thorny pathway up to God,
The blessed virgin Dorothy.
Still to the blessed Three-in-One
Be glory, honor, worship done
Beneath the sun ! ’

LYING IN THE GRASS.

BETWEEN two golden tufts of summer grass,
I see the world through hot air as through glass,
And by my face sweet lights and colors pass.

Before me, dark against the fading sky,
 I watch three mowers mowing, as I lie:
 With brawny arms they sweep in harmony.

Brown English faces by the sun burnt red,
 Rich glowing color on bare throat and head,
 My heart would leap to watch them, were I dead!

And in my strong young living as I lie,
 I seem to move with them in harmony, —
 A fourth is mowing, and that fourth am I.

The music of the scythes that glide and leap,
 The young men whistling as their great arms sweep,
 And all the perfume and sweet sense of sleep,

The weary butterflies that droop their wings,
 The dreamy nightingale that hardly sings,
 And all the lassitude of happy things,

Is mingling with the warm and pulsing blood
 That gushes through my veins a languid flood,
 And feeds my spirit as the sap a bud.

Behind the mowers, on the amber air,
 A dark-green beech wood rises, still and fair,
 A white path winding up it like a stair.

And see that girl, with pitcher on her head,
 And clean white apron on her gown of red, —
 Her even-song of love is but half-said:

She waits the youngest mower. Now he goes;
 Her cheeks are redder than a wild blush-rose:
 They climb up where the deepest shadows close.

But though they pass, and vanish, I am there.
 I watch his rough hands meet beneath her hair,
 Their broken speech sounds sweet to me like prayer.

Ah ! now the rosy children come to play,
And romp and struggle with the new-mown hay ;
Their clear high voices sound from far away.

They know so little why the world is sad,
They dig themselves warm graves and yet are glad ;
Their muffled screams and laughter make me mad !

I long to go and play among them there ;
Unseen, like wind, to take them by the hair,
And gently make their rosy cheeks more fair.

The happy children ! full of frank surprise,
And sudden whims and innocent extacies ;
What godhead sparkles from their liquid eyes !

No wonder round those urns of mingled clays
That Tuscan potters fashioned in old days,
And colored like the torrid earth ablaze,

We find the little gods and loves portrayed,
Through ancient forests wandering undismayed,
And fluting hymns of pleasure unafraid.

They knew, as I do now, what keen delight,
A strong man feels to watch the tender flight
Of little children playing in his sight ;

What pure sweet pleasure, and what sacred love,
Comes drifting down upon us from above,
In watching how their limbs and features move.

I do not hunger for a well-stored mind,
I only wish to live my life, and find
My heart in unison with all mankind.

My life is like the single dewy star
That trembles on the horizon's primrose-bar, —
A microcosm where all things living are.

And if, among the noiseless grasses, Death
Should come behind and take away my breath,
I should not rise as one who sorroweth ;

For I should pass, but all the world would be
Full of desire and young delight and glee,
And why should men be sad through loss of me ?

The light is flying ; in the silver-blue
The young moon shines from her bright window through :
The mowers are all gone, and I go too.

THE FEAR OF DEATH.

LAST night I woke and found between us drawn, —
Between us, where no mortal fear may creep, —
The vision of Death dividing us in sleep ;
And suddenly I thought, Ere light shall dawn
Some day, — the substance, not the shadow, of Death
Shall cleave us like a sword. The vision passed,
But all its new-born horror held me fast,
And till day broke I listened for your breath.
Some day to wake, and find that colored skies,
And pipings in the woods, and petals wet,
Are things for aching memory to forget ;
And that your living hands and mouth and eyes
Are part of all the world's old histories ! —
Dear God ! a little longer, ah not yet !

HARRIET ELEANOR HAMILTON KING.

FROM 'THE DISCIPLES.'¹⁵

FROM THE OVERTURE.

I WRITE of the Disciples, because He
Who was their Master, having left on earth
The memory of a face that none could paint,
The echo of a voice that none could reach,
Hath left his own immortal words and works
To be a witness for him. Who should dare
To add one line or lesson unto these?
And in this year of loss, this first blank year
For us whom he held near and dear to him,
The heart is far too full to speak of thee,
Except through speaking of thy faithful ones,
JOSEPH MAZZINI, Master, first of those
The Sons of Men who are the Sons of God!
O Book of mine, which he commanded! long
Waited and worked for, and achieved too late!
Whose first leaves flying over-seas, like flights
Of white doves loosened sweeping straight to home,
Were carried unto Pisa, and found there
Mourning, and at the dead feet were laid low,
Instead of in the master's living hand; —
One day too late, and so came short for all,
And missed the confirmation of his eyes;
Missed for this world the comfort of his voice; —
But have not therefore been unknown to him.

I do but write as he inspired it me ;
 There is no passage but he knew it first ;
 I know there is no line but must have passed
 Sometime or other through his brain to mine ;
 Though not by utterance, by the finer threads,
 Which we who live by vision more than speech,
 Are conscious of, but cannot frame again.

.

But I loved thee ; I knew thee the first time
 My eyes fell on some words of thine by chance.
 I was a child then : — and when I am old,
 And my eyes fail from following in their flights
 The autumn birds into the far-off heavens,
 Still mid the youth of that day I shall stand
 Prouder than any in their pride of life,
 Having beheld what they shall never see,
 Having heard words that they can never hear,
 Having a face to make the darkness dawn,
 Ever within my memory for a friend ;
 Remembering through the twilight of those days
 This solace of the sunrise, this delight,
 Bought by such pain as then shall nigh be past. —
 For grace he gave me that outweighs all pain,
 And light of heart I follow, dark or clear ;
 Because I hold a prouder laurel-leaf
 Than any singer of imperial courts :
 For he, the Seer, the Master, and the Saint,
 Named me his poet, crowned me laureate
 Of his Republic : — therefore are these words.

I hold this charge for ever on my soul ; —
 He loved me, he looked on me with such eyes
 As sent forth many a young heroic life
 To die rejoicing on a lonely quest ;
 Saying to me, ‘ Do not die, but live, and speak

The words that God speaks to thee. Do not shrink
For youth or for subjection: — I endorse
Thy speech beforehand, for I see thy soul.
Hath not God written somewhat on thy face
To fade and flicker, for a few to see?
Write it out large in words that will not fade,
And that can travel farther than thy eyes,
And will not die when thou art laid in dust.
I lay it on thee that thou keep not back
That fire of life that burns thy brow so clear.
What springs from a pure heart and a true mind,
And a will bound to the Eternal Will,
With eyes that look beyond the world to God,
Is worth the hearing. Do not doubt, but speak.'

For nine long years I held my peace, while God,
By tender tokens irresistible,
Laid silence on me; or by manifold
Pressure of claims and voices from without;
Or overmastering constancy of pain
(The cares and troubles of the outer courts,
Not of the inner, where the angels sing
Ever, through clouds, through winds, through fires, through
calm).

And once he chided me because the songs
Were slow in coming: — now I think he knows
(Or would know were it not too small a thing)
The truth he took in trust upon my word.
For I made answer, 'If I must be dumb,
If breath but lasts for labor, not for speech,
It is not that I falter in my faith,
It is not that I alter in my will,
It is not that I fail from idleness:
It is that God hath set such bounds for me,
I cannot pass them; — I can say no more.

But grant me this assurance once for all —
 By that obedience which is life to me,
 Binding me one with higher law of life —
 That thou wilt trust me? I am true to thee.
 Dost thou believe it? And if, all the years,
 My lips are loosed not, and no word of mine
 Bear witness for me that my faith is firm,
 And still I follow in the speechless trance,
 Wilt thou believe it? ' And he looked at me
 With searching eyes, — then answered grave and clear,
 'I will believe it.' And we spake no more.

And now I speak, not with the bird's free voice,
 Who wakens the first mornings of the year
 With low sweet pipings, dropped among the dew;
 Then stops and ceases, saying, 'All the spring
 And summer lies before me; I will sleep;
 And sing a little louder, while the green
 Builds up the scattered spaces of the boughs;
 And faster, while the grasses grow to flower
 Beneath my music; let the full song grow
 With the full year, till the heart too is filled.'

But as the Swan (who has passed through the spring,
 And found it snow still in the white North land,
 And over perilous wilds of Northern seas,
 White wings above the white and wintry waves,
 Has won, through night and battle of the blasts,
 Breathless, alone, without one note or cry)
 Sinks into summer by a land at last;
 And knows his wings are broken, and the floods
 Will bear him with them whither God shall will; —
 And knows he has one hour between the tides; —
 And sees the salt and silent marshes spread
 Before him outward to the shining sea,
 Whereon was never any music heard. —

I am not proud for anything of mine,
Done, dreamed, or suffered, but for this alone :
That the great orb of that great human soul
Did once deflect and draw this orb of mine
(In the shadow of it, not the sunward side),
Until it touched and trembled on the line
By which my orbit crossed the plane of his ;
And heard the music of that glorious sphere
Resound a moment ; and so passed again,
Vibrating with it, out on its own way ;
Where, intertwined with others, it may yet
Spin through its manifold mazes of ellipse,
Amid the clangor of a myriad more,
Revolving, and the dimness of the depths
Remotest, through the shadows without shape,
Arcs of aphelion, silences of snow :
But henceforth doth no more go spiritless,
But knows its own pole through the whirling ways,
And hath beheld the Angel of the Sun,
And yearns to it, and follows thereunto ;
And feels the conscious thrill that doth transmute
Inertia to obedience, underneath
The ordered sway of balanced counter-force,
That speedeth all life onward through all space ;
And hears the key-note of all various worlds,
Caught and combined in one vast harmony,
And floated down the perfect Heavens of God.

THE SERMON IN THE HOSPITAL.

FROM 'UGO BASSI,' PART III.

Now I heard
Fra Ugo Bassi preach. For though in Rome
He held no public ministry this year,
On Sundays in the hospital he took

His turn in preaching, at the service held
 Where five long chambers, lined with suffering folk,
 Converged, and in the midst an altar stood,
 By which on feast-days stood the priest, and spoke.
 And I remember how, one day in March,
 When all the air was thrilling with the spring,
 And even the sick people in their beds
 Felt, though they could not see it, he stood there ;
 Looking down all the lines of weary life,
 Still for a little under the sweet voice,
 And spoke this sermon to them, tenderly,
 As it was written down by one who heard :

‘I am the True Vine,’ said our Lord, ‘and Ye,
 My Brethren, are the Branches ;’ and that Vine,
 Then first uplifted in its place, and hung
 With its first purple grapes, since then has grown,
 Until its green leaves gladden half the world,
 And from its countless clusters rivers flow
 For healing of the nations, and its boughs
 Innumerable stretch through all the earth,
 Ever increasing, ever each entwined
 With each, all living from the Central Heart.
 And you and I, my brethren, live and grow,
 Branches of that immortal human Stem.

Let us consider now this life of the Vine,
 Whereof we are partakers : we shall see
 Its way is not of pleasure nor of ease.
 It groweth not like the wild trailing weeds
 Whither it willeth, flowering here and there ;
 Or lifting up proud blossoms to the sun,
 Kissed by the butterflies, and glad for life,
 And glorious in their beautiful array ;
 Or running into lovely labyrinths

Of many forms and many fantasies,
Rejoicing in its own luxuriant life.

The flower of the Vine is but a little thing,
The least part of its life ; — you scarce could tell
It ever had a flower ; the fruit begins
Almost before the flower has had its day.
And as it grows, it is not free to heaven,
But tied to a stake ; and if its arms stretch out,
It is but crosswise, also forced and bound ;
And so it draws out of the hard hill-side,
Fixed in its own place, its own food of life ;
And quickens with it, breaking forth in bud,
Joyous and green, and exquisite of form,
Wreathed lightly into tendril, leaf, and bloom.
Yea, the grace of the green vine makes all the land
Lovely in spring-time ; and it still grows on
Faster, in lavishness of its own life ;
Till the fair shoots begin to wind and wave
In the blue air, and feel how sweet it is.
But so they leave it not ; the husbandman
Comes early, with the pruning-hooks and shears,
And strips it bare of all its innocent pride,
And wandering garlands, and cuts deep and sure,
Unsparring for its tenderness and joy.
And in its loss and pain it wasteth not ;
But yields itself with unabated life,
More perfect under the despoiling hand.
The bleeding limbs are hardened into wood ;
The thinned-out bunches ripen into fruit
More full and precious, to the purple prime.

And still, the more it grows, the straitlier bound
Are all its branches ; and as rounds the fruit,
And the heart's crimson comes to show in it,
And it advances to its hour, — its leaves
Begin to droop and wither in the sun ;

But still the life-blood flows, and does not fail,
All into fruitfulness, all into form.

Then comes the vintage, for the days are ripe.
And surely now in its perfected bloom,
It may rejoice a little in its crown,
Though it bend low beneath the weight of it,
Wrought out of the long striving of its heart.
But ah ! the hands are ready to tear down
The treasures of the grapes ; the feet are there
To tread them in the winepress, gathered in ;
Until the blood-red rivers of the wine
Run over, and the land is full of joy.
But the vine standeth stripped and desolate,
Having given all ; and now its own dark time
Is come, and no man payeth back to it
The comfort and the glory of its gift ;
But rather, now most merciless, all pain
And loss are piled together, as its days
Decline, and the spring sap has ceased to flow
Now is it cut back to the very stem ;
Despoiled, disfigured, left a leafless stock,
Alone through all the dark days that shall come.
And all the winter-time the wine gives joy
To those who else were dismal in the cold ;
But the vine standeth out amid the frost ;
And after all, hath only this grace left,
That it endures in long, lone steadfastness
The winter through : — and next year blooms again ;
Not bitter for the torment undergone,
Not barren for the fulness yielded up ;
As fair and fruitful towards the sacrifice,
As if no touch had ever come to it,
But the soft airs of heaven and dews of earth ; —
And so fulfils itself in love once more.

And now, what more shall I say? Do I need here
To draw the lesson of this life; or say
More than these few words, following up the text : -
The Vine from every living limb bleeds wine;
Is it the poorer for that spirit shed?
The drunkard and the wanton drink thereof;
Are they the richer for that gift's excess?
Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
And whoso suffers most hath most to give.

I speak to those who suffer: — they will know,
Better than I, the whole deep truth of it.
I who stand here complete in all my flesh,
Strong in the morning, sleeping fast at night,
Taking the winds of heaven as they blow,
Without a special sense save joy in each,
Am not so much as worthy to stoop down
And kiss the sacred foot-prints of my Lord
Upon the feet of any such a one
As lieth patient here beneath His hand;
Whom Christ has bound on His own cross, to lie
Beside Him, till Himself shall give release;
And that shall not be, many a one knows well,
Until his place knows him no more on earth.

.

Many are pains of life; — I need not stay
To count them; — there is no one but hath felt
Some of them, — though unequally they fall.
But of all good gifts, ever hath been health
Counted the first, and loss of it to be
The hardest thing to bear: I do not speak
Of such imperfect passages of pain
As show us we are mortal, and should stir

Our hearts to greater diligence in life ; —
 But such long weakness, and such wearing pain
 As has no end in view, that makes of life
 One weary avenue of darkened days,
 The bitter darkness growing darker still,
 Which none can share or soothe, which sunders us
 From all desire, or hope, or stir of change,
 Or service of our Master in the world,
 Or fellowship with all the faces round
 Of passing pains and pleasures, — while our pain
 Passeth not, nor will pass ; — and only this
 Remains for us to look for, — more of pain,
 And doubt if we can bear it to the end.

And furthermore, from any other ill,
 Except it be remorse, can men escape
 By work, the healing of divinest balm
 To whomso hath the courage to begin,
 Not yielding to the bitterness of grief.
 Or if that tyrannously be denied,
 And the soul languishes in utter loss,
 Still hope of an immortal, better life
 Is left to every suffering innocence ;
 And love of every sweet and noble thing,
 Though farther off than the far side of death ;
 And faith to feed upon, and keep the heart
 Alive, through all the winter of this time.

But sickness holds the sick man in a chain
 No will can break or bend to earthly use ;
 Not only holding him in bond of space,
 Fixed in a rooted vegetable lot ; —
 But bond of time, so that the Present makes
 All his possession, and he has no part
 In any other being, all his nerves
 Gathered and fixed in one intensest strain
 Upon the Present ; and no future bliss,

Nor harmony of past remembrances,
Can draw him from the anguish of the hour,
Or pay him back his loss, if loss it be.
Is it indeed a loss, or is it gain ?
His Life is Pain, and he has naught besides :
Most miserable must he be indeed,
If this be wholly evil, as it seems.

But if this be the hardest ill of all
For mortal flesh and heart to bear in peace,
It is the one comes straightest from God's hand,
And makes us feel him nearest to ourselves.
God gives us light and love, and all good things
Richly for joy, and power, to use aright ;
But then we may forget Him in His gifts :
We cannot well forget the hand that holds,
And pierces us, and will not let us go,
However much we strive from under it.

.

If suffering be indeed our Law of Life,
If this world through our fathers' sin and ours,
May not be perfect any more until
The slow development of centuries
Do bring to birth a higher race than we,
It is so much the more a fitting school
Of patience, for the time we must remain, —
Of charity towards fellow-wayfarers
Beside us bearing each his human cross,
In secret or in sight, but each his own ;
And furthermore of hope, the unblamed hope
Of the new world wherein all things are new,
Where only their own works do follow them
Who rest from pain and labor, and by faith
And love have won a nearer step towards God.
Hope thitherward for this life's recompense ;
For here what one sows must another reap,

And children suffer for their fathers' sins
 While they live here ; but in that other world
 Shall each man reap his own inheritance :
 Such heritage as he has left behind
 For those who follow here, who are the worse
 Or better for his sojourning with them.

But if it be the worse, if the foregone
 Sin of thy parents or some other one's,
 (For our lives here are mostly in the power
 Of other lives, and each of us is bound
 To be his brother's keeper), have made earth
 Alien to thee, and poisoned at the fount
 The natural springs of joy, and set within
 The wheels of life a crook, that never more
 Swiftly and smoothly they may turn, and bound
 Weights on thy ankles, — what is that to thee,
 Who livest not for one time, but for all ?
 God keeps account of that ; only take care
 Those same pathetic haunting eyes of thine,
 For which some soul doth suffer punishment,
 Do meet thee not again in wife or child,
 Or sick man at thy gates, or starving man
 That wrought thy goodly raiment, or the brute
 And ignorant fury of the brotherless,
 Whose firebrand lights the roofs of palaces.
 Look not on thine own loss, but look beyond,
 And take the Cross for glory and for guide.

For one star differeth from another star
 In glory and in use ; and all are stairs
 Of the illimitable House of God ;
 And every one has its own name and place
 Distinguished, and some special word is given
 For each to utter in the mystic song
 Which is not found in speech of humankind,

Which is not understood by human heart,
Even though heard by those caught up to Heaven,
Who heard and saw, but could not tell the things
Which they had heard and seen, — which neither men
Nor angels, nor the conscious suns of space,
Nor anything created, hears in whole;
But that grows fuller, clearer, as we grow
Nearer to God, with Whom is neither part
Nor pause, Who gathers in one Infinite
All number, sound, and space, and light, and law,
Rejoicing utterly, eternally.

And when God formed in the hollow of His hand
This ball of Earth among His other balls,
And set it in His shining firmament,
Between the greater and the lesser lights,
He chose it for the Star of Suffering.

.

And that most closely we may follow Him
By suffering, have all hearts of men allowed.
Is suffering then more near and dear to God
For its own sake than joy is? God forbid!
We know not its beginning nor its end;
Is it a sacrifice? a test? a school?
The fruit of Evil; — yet what Evil means
None knoweth, though he spent his life to know.
We suffer. Why we suffer, — that is hid
With God's foreknowledge in the clonds of Heaven.
The first book written sends that human cry
Out of the clear Chaldean pasture-lands
Down forty centuries; and no answer yet
Is found, nor will be found, while yet we live
In limitations of Humanity.

.

But if, impatient, thou let slip thy cross,
Thou wilt not find it in this world again,

Nor in another ; here, and here alone
 Is given thee to *suffer* for God's sake.
 In other worlds we shall more perfectly
 Serve Him and love Him, praise Him, work for Him,
 Grow near and nearer Him with all delight ;
 But then we shall not any more be called
 To suffer, which is our appointment here.
 Canst thou not suffer then one hour, — or two ?
 If He should call thee from thy cross to-day,
 Saying, It is finished ! — that hard cross of thine
 From which thou prayest for deliverance,
 Thinkest thou not some passion of regret
 Would overcome thee ? Thou wouldst say, ' So soon ?
 Let me go back, and suffer yet awhile
 More patiently ; — I have not yet praised God.'
 And He might answer to thee, — ' Never more.
 All pain is done with.' Whensoever it comes,
 That summons that we look for, it will seem
 Soon, yea too soon. Let us take heed in time
 That God may now be glorified in us ;
 And while we suffer, let us set our souls
 To suffer perfectly : since this alone,
 The suffering, which is this world's special grace,
 May here be perfected and left behind.

— But in obedience and humility ; —
 Waiting on God's hand, not forestalling it.
 Seek not to snatch presumptuously the palm
 By self-election ; poison not thy wine
 With bitter herbs if He has made it sweet ;
 Nor rob God's treasures because the key
 Is easy to be turned by mortal hands.
 The gifts of birth, death, genius, suffering,
 Are all for His hand only to bestow.
 Receive thy portion, and be satisfied.
 Who crowns himself a king is not the more

Royal; nor he who mars himself with stripes
The more partaker of the Cross of Christ.

But if Himself He come to thee, and stand
Beside thee, gazing down on thee with eyes
That smile, and suffer; that will smite thy heart,
With their own pity, to a passionate peace;
And reach to thee Himself the Holy Cup,
(With all its wreathen stems of passion-flowers
And quivering sparkles of the ruby stars),
Pallid and royal, saying 'Drink with Me;'
Wilt thou refuse? Nay, not for Paradise!
The pale brow will compel thee, the pure hands
Will minister unto thee; thou shalt take
Of that communion through the solemn depths
Of the dark waters of thine agony,
With heart that praises Him, that yearns to Him
The closer through that hour. Hold fast His hand,
Though the nails pierce thine too! take only care
Lest one drop of the sacramental wine
Be spilled, of that which ever shall unite
Thee, soul and body to thy living Lord!

Therefore gird up thyself, and come, to stand
Unflinching under the unfaltering hand,
That waits to prove thee to the uttermost.
It were not hard to suffer by His hand,
If thou couldst see His face; — but in the dark!
That is the one last trial: — be it so.
Christ was forsaken, so must thou be too:
How couldst thou suffer but in seeming, else?
Thou wilt not see the face nor feel the hand,
Only the cruel crushing of the feet,
When through the bitter night the Lord comes down
To tread the winepress. — Not by sight, but faith,
Endure, endure, — be faithful to the end!

AGESILAO MILANO.

NAPLES, 1856.

FOR the glory and the passion of this midnight,
 I praise Thy name, I give Thee thanks, O Christ !
 Thou that hast neither failed me nor forsaken,
 Through these hard hours with victory overpriced ;
 Now that I too of thy passion have partaken,
 For the world's sake called, elected, sacrificed.

Thou wast alone through thy redemption-vigil,
 Thy friends had fled ;
 The angel at the garden from Thee parted,
 And solitude instead,
 More than the scourge, or cross, O tender-hearted,
 Under the crown of thorns bowed down Thy head.

But I, amid the torture and the taunting,
 I have had Thee !
 Thy hand was holding my hand fast and faster,
 Thy voice was close to me,
 And glorious eyes said, ' Follow me, thy Master,
 Smile as I smile thy faithfulness to see.'

.

Master, our hearts can save us as thou spakest !
 Have they not spent
 All night their uttermost on me unholpen ?
 Behold my body rent
 And broken ;— but among the wounds wide open
 Ye will not find a broken sacrament.

By the deed done, by torture overmastered,
 And death outbraved,
 For ever from denial and dishonor,
 Soul, thou this night art saved !

Italia, with the purple robe upon her,
Shall know me faithful by these scars engraved.

‘Spared but till sunrise;—else would Death forestall us,
Mercifullest.’

Yea, all their worst is done, they cannot keep me
Now, should they do their best,
Back from the gates of Paradise, nor steep me
In any healing balm of earthly rest.

Sunrise! and it is summer, and the morning
Waits glorified
An hour hence, when the cool clear rose-cloud gathers
About heaven’s eastern side,
And down the azure grottos where the bathers
Loose the tired limbs, a lovely light will glide.

Fold after fold the winding waves of opal
The sands will drown;
And when the morning-star amid the pearly
Light of the east goes down,
Then my star shall arise, and late and early
Shine for a jewel in the Master’s crown.

Mazzini, Master, singer of the sunrise!
Knowest thou me?
I held thy hand once, and the summer lightning
Still of thy smile I see;
Me thou rememberest not amidst the heightening
Vision of God, and of God’s Will to be.

But thou wilt hear of me, by noon to-morrow,
And henceforth I
Shall be to thee a memory and a token
Out of the starry sky;
And when my soul unto thy soul hath spoken,
Enough,—I shall not wholly pass nor die.

Italia, when thou comest to thy kingdom,
 Remember me !
 Me, who on this thy night of shame and sorrow
 Was scourged and slain with thee ;
 Me, who upon thy resurrection morrow
 Shall stand among thy sons beside thy knee.

Shalt thou not be one day, indeed, O Mother,
 Enthroned of all,
 To the world's vision as to ours now only,
 At Rome for festival ;
 Around thee gathered all thy lost and lonely
 And loyal ones, that failed not at thy call.

With golden lyre, or violet robe of mourning,
 Or battle-scar ;—
 And one shall stand more glorious than the others,
 He of the Morning-Star,
 Whose face lights all the faces of his brothers,
 Out of the silvery northern land afar.

But grant to me there, unto all beholders,
 Bare to the skies,
 To stand with bleeding hands, and feet, and shoulders,
 And rapt, unflinching eyes,
 And locked lips, yielding to the question-holders
 Nor moanings, nor beseechings, nor replies.

Is the hour hard ? Too soon it will be over,
 Too sweet, too sore ;
 The arms of Death fold over me with rapture,
 Life knew not heretofore ;
 Heaven will be peace, but I shall not recapture
 The passion of this hour, for evermore.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

THE SUN-WORSHIPPER.

As a wild comet through the night she hies,
Her face bent towards the temple of the sun,
With golden hair that on the darkness lies
Like break of dawn when daylight, scarce begun,
Meanders into flame whose flashes run
Along the lower skies.

Soon as the sun lifts up the morning haze
She rushes towards him ; sinks unto the ground
And, clasping the all-shining Presence, prays
In his first beams : again her god is found ;
The startled shadows that her heart surround
Are dizzy in his rays.

‘ Thee I adore, O Sun ! this heart is thine !
The youth who blindly claims its ecstasy
Seeks not thy temple, honors not thy shrine ;
He kneels not, utters not his vows to thee
Who all the worlds beyond this world can’t see,
And mak’st all things divine.’

The sun-flowers turn to heaven as still she kneels,
Shall then her heart its coming vow deplore ?
Not uttered yet, all utterance it reveals,
And she restrains her ecstasy no more :
Her burning lips the hasty vow outpour
Which her heart trouble seals.

‘Never, O Sun ! till sinking in the west
 Thou risest where thy wondrous setting spreads,
 While all who love thee slumber in thy rest,
 Shall he, who proudly in thy presence treads
 Enthrall me in the light his beauty sheds,
 Or wed me to his breast !’

Silence has tongues ; she hears a sister say,
 ‘List to the voice of thy companion-mind !
 Thy love is still the same as yesterday ;
 It has not passed, it only lags behind,
 And thou art lonely as the wistful wind
 Thou meet’st upon the way.’

Yet she repeats her vow, her heart in pain,
 To draw some love from heaven, as from the well
 Whose radiant springs she once craved not in vain :
 But ebbing hope allures her by its spell
 To past despair, on other days to dwell, —
 And suffer them again.

Across the hills of heliotrope she creeps,
 Or winds within the many-shadowed wolds,
 Till once again the sun her pathway sweeps,
 And from her weary feet the way withholds ;
 The sacred flowers embrace her in their folds ;
 From dawn to dawn she sleeps.

She sleeps ; so still, not even her shadow veers
 Save when from side to side the moonflood roves ;
 But in sky-dreams the sun to her appears,
 Yet with the visage of the one she loves ; —
 All through her sleep in phantom light he moves,
 And still that face he bears.

She sleeps, and with the beaming of a bride
 Beholds that face ; ah ! never to be wed !
 Yet why a tear, no sorrow shall betide :

Though distant borne, his rays on her are shed ;
Her soul, along its way of glory sped,
Shall in his light abide.

She wakes up with the sun, but in his rise
Sees the rich twilight of her love-dream wane :
Day seems to sink in the deserted skies,
Whose broken, many-colored beams remain
As of her dream whose night comes back again ;
'T was dawn had closed her eyes.

The cloud-slopes blossom still, but cold and lone ;
Down them she floated in those heavenly dreams,
And still the veil that o'er her slumbers shone
Hangs gold-wrought in the fervor of those beams.
She kneels while watching the last fading gleams
O'er the gray twilight thrown.

With speechless lips she questions the chill blaze :
Behold the sun returns ; that brighter flush
Were surely day ? Yet she mistrusts her gaze
Though the light widens and with lordly rush
The sun bursts forth in morning's youthful blush
And floods the heaven with rays.

Trembling she sees the paleness of her face
In those white clouds which now the sun surround,
Who doth in heaven his spectral way retrace.
Behold, the days brought back, the hours unwound,
The angry sun unto the zenith bound
And the pale moon replace !

Perplexed, all lost, she staggers to the height
Where the twelve pillars in their beauty shine,
The temple circling in the blessèd light ;
There prostrate doth she o'er her vow repine ;
But fears to meet the arbiter divine
Who banishes the night.

From the lone steps at length she looks above:
Behold the face is there that filled her dreams;
The youth adored, triumphant o'er her love,
There radiant shines amid descending beams;
His lustrous hair in the rich sunshine streams,
With golden lights inwove.

She lifts her arms, she falls upon the face
She loved in heaven; her yearning heart, too blest,
Doth in deep sobs its erring way retrace.
All passion weeps, while gathers in her breast
A bliss that bears her spirit to its rest
In that divine embrace.

THE SNAKE-CHARMER.

THE forest rears on lifted arms
A world of leaves, whence verdurous light
Shakes through the shady depths and warms
Proud tree and stealthy parasite,
There where those cruel coils enclasp
The trunks they strangle in their grasp.

An old man creeps from out the woods,
Breaking the vine's entangling spell;
He thrids the jungle's solitudes,
O'er bamboos rotting where they fell;
Slow down the tiger's path he wends
Where at the pool the jungle ends.

No moss-greened alley tells the trace
Of his lone step, no sound is stirred,
Even when his tawny hands displace
The boughs, that backward sweep unheard.
His way as noiseless as the trail
Of the swift snake and pilgrim snail.

The old snake-charmer, — once he played
 Soft music for the serpent's ear,
 But now his cunning hand is stayed ;
 He knows the hour of death is near.
 And all that live in brake and bough,
 All know the brand is on his brow.

Yet where his soul is he must go :
 He crawls along from tree to tree.
 The old snake-charmer, doth he know
 If snake or beast of prey he be ?
 Bewildered at the pool he lies
 And sees as through a serpent's eyes.

Weeds wove with white-flowered lily crops
 Drink of the pool, and serpents hie
 To the thin brink as noonday drops,
 And in the froth-daubed rushes lie.
 There rests he now with fastened breath
 'Neath a kind sun to bask in death.

The pool is bright with glossy dyes
 And cast-up bubbles of decay :
 A green death-leaven overlies
 Its mottled scum, where shadows play
 As the snake's hollow coil, fresh shed,
 Rolls in the wind across its bed.

No more the wily note is heard
 From his full flute — the riving air
 That tames the snake, decoys the bird,
 Worries the she-wolf from her lair.
 Fain would he bid its parting breath
 Drown in his ears the voice of death.

Still doth his soul's vague longing skim
 The pool beloved : he hears the hiss

That siffles at the sedgy rim,
 Recalling days of former bliss,
 And the death-drops, that fall in showers,
 Seem honied dewes from shady flowers.

There is a rustle of the breeze
 And twitter of the singing bird ;
 He snatches at the melodies
 And his faint lips again are stirred :
 The olden sounds are in his ears ;
 But still the snake its crest uprears.

His eyes are swimming in the mist
 That films the earth like serpent's breath :
 And now, — as if a serpent hissed, —
 The husky whisperings of Death
 Fill ear and brain — he looks around —
 Serpents seem matted o'er the ground.

Soon visions of past joys bewitch
 His crafty soul ; his hands would set
 Death's snare, while now his fingers twitch
 The tasselled reed as 't were his net.
 But his thin lips no longer fill
 The woods with song ; his flute is still.

Those lips still quaver to the flute,
 But fast the life-tide ebbs away ;
 Those lips now quaver and are mute,
 But nature throbs in breathless play :
 Birds are in open song, the snakes
 Are watching in the silent brakes.

In sudden fear of snares unseen
 The birds like crimson sunset swarm,
 All gold and purple, red and green,
 And seek each other for the charm.

Lizards dart up the feathery trees
Like shadows of a rainbow breeze.

The wildered birds again have rushed
 Into the charm, — it is the hour
When the shrill forest-note is hushed,
 And they obey the serpent's power, —
Drawn to its gaze with troubled whirr,
As by the thread of falconer.

As 't were to feed, on slanting wings
 They drop within the serpent's glare :
Eyes flashing fire in burning rings
 Which spread into the dazzled air ;
They flutter in the glittering coils ;
The charmer dreads the serpent's toils.

While Music swims away in death
 Man's spell is passing to his slaves :
The snake feeds on the charmer's breath,
 The vulture screams, the parrot raves,
The lone hyena laughs and howls,
The tiger from the jungle growls.

Then mounts the eagle — flame-flecked folds
 Belt its proud plumes ; a feather falls :
He hears the death-cry, he beholds
 The king-bird in the serpent's thralls,
He looks with terror on the feud, —
And the sun shines through dripping blood.

The deadly spell a moment gone —
 Birds, from a distant Paradise,
Strike the winged signal and have flown,
 Trailing rich hues through azure skies :
The serpent falls ; like demon wings
The far-out branching cedar swings.

The wood swims round ; the pool and skies
 Have met ; the death-drops down that cheek
 Fall faster ; for the serpent's eyes
 Grow human, and the charmer's seek.
 A gaze like man's directs the dart
 Which now is buried at his heart.

The monarch of the world is cold :
 The charm he bore has passed away :
 The serpent gathers up its fold
 To wind about its human prey.
 The red mouth darts a dizzy sting,
 And clenches the eternal ring.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.

FROM 'SISTER ANNUNCIATA.'¹⁶

BUT ah the long ascent! It was enough
At first to learn the patience that subdued
My throbbing heart to its new quiet rule,
The hope of Heaven that bore down earth's despair —
But these were comfort, and the craving grew
As natural for them as the sick man's
For the pain-soothing draught he learned perforce
To school his palate to. But then the effort
To be another self, to know no more
The fine-linked dreams of youth, the flying thoughts
Like sparkles on the wave-tops changing place
And all one scattered brightness, the high schemes
And glorious wild endeavors after good,
Fond, bubble-soaring, but how beautiful!
The sweet unreal reveries, the gush
Of voiceless songs deep in the swelling heart,
The dear delight of happy girlish hopes —
Of, ah my folly! some hopes too strange sweet
That I dare think of them even to rebuke —
Ah, not to be forgotten though they lie
Too deep for even memory. Alas!
Even if I would, how could I now recall
To their long-faded forms those phantasies
Of a far, other, consciousness which now
Beneath the ashes of their former selves

Lie a dead part of me, but still a part,
Oh evermore a part.

I do not think

There can be sin in that, in knowing it.
I am not nursing the old foolish love
Which clogged my spirit in those bitter days.
Ah no, dear as it was even in its pain,
I have trampled on it, crushed its last life out.
I do not dread the beautiful serpent now;
It cannot breathe again, not if I tried
To warm it at my breast, it is too dead
And my heart has grown too cold; the Lord himself,
I thank Him, has renewed it virgin-cold
To give to Him. I do but recognize
A simple truth, that that which has been lived,
Lived down to the deeps of the true being,
Even when past for ever, has become
Inseparable from the lifelong self:
But yet it lives not with the *present* life.
So, in this wise, I may unshamed perceive
That the dead life, that the dead love, are still
A part of me.

.

Have I slept? But no, I think I was in prayer
The whole time that I knelt — unless indeed
A little heavy moment at the last;
It is too chill for sleep. How strange and gray
The morning glimmers! What an awful thing,
Although one feels not why, the silence is
When the new creeping light treads on the dark
Like a white mist above it, and beside
Its leaden pallor hollow blacknesses
Lurk, shifting into limp uncertain shapes.
No place so long familiar but it seems
Weird and unwonted in such eery hours.

I wish my taper could have lingered out
 Until the yellow dawn. Was that the wind
 Hissing between the jarring lattice crannies,
 Or a whispering voice in the room? Hush there again!
 Nay, 't is the wind. What voice should come to me?
 I hear no voices, I; no visions yet
 Break on my tranced eyes when I seek God.
 I have not risen so high; neither I think
 Fallen so at Satan's mercy that he dare
 Front me with open tokens of the watch
 Which he keeps whensoever one of his foes
 Keeps holy watch alone. Yea, there again!
 It is the rising wind-gust. How it moves
 The shadow of that pine-bough on the wall,
 Just growing plain-defined upon the square
 The window makes of light across the room.
 One might see it like an arm now, finger-stretched
 In act to curse — a withered witch-like arm
 Waving its spells. But then another shadow,
 The cross from the mullions, lies athwart it there
 And that is steady. So the cross prevails
 Over the curse.

.

I have thought too long,
 I lose myself. What wonder? In one night
 To live back all one's youth — though mine was short.
 And yet it seems a long long age of life
 Remote by longer ages. Strange it is
 That the brief exquisite mood of a deep bliss
 Which, being lived, seemed to be some few hours,
 Seems, being lost, as if a long life's whole
 Had passed in it. 'T was but a year or so,
 Count it by days upon the calendar,
 And now —

Oh living days! oh happy days!

Oh days a dream with happiness! — a dream —
 A dream — I am with you — Ah yes — a dream
 I am with you

.

What was I pondering
 Before this drowsy languor stole my will?
 Let me remember.

Yes the sins and follies
 Of my vain youth. But I had almost done —
 Or had I? Where was I in the blurred page
 Whose half-forgotten fragment — facts from days
 That were no more all faults than all good deeds
 I am bidden read in the dusk that time has made?
 Ah me! how to be-think me? When there grows
 The counterfeit of some large landscape known
 In past familiar days upon that sense
 Which seems an inward memory of the eye —
 Grows, at the plainest even, half as if
 One looked upon it with the former sight —
 If one were bidden break the vivid whole
 Into its several parts traced point by point,
 Or more, if one were bidden duly note
 The rocks that broke the smoothness of the lake,
 Or the black fissures on the great snow-hills,
 Or say the pools along the marshy wastes,
 How the thought-picture would become perplexed
 Into a shifting puzzle, and the sight
 Would ache that vainly tried to scan by units.
 Even so it seems to me when I essay
 To singly look upon the marring flaws
 That foiled my youth's best virtues, or on those
 That of its evil made the blackest scars.

Weary, so weary of the effort! Nay
 I *will* remember! Well my girlish days
 Were full of faults — were doubtless full of faults —

Were full of faults : but what were the faults' names ?
 I am forgetting what I seek — their names ?
 Why there was many a paltry selfishness —
 Many no doubt, for I was often shamed
 To be so much below the self I dreamed—
 Only I cannot call them singly back.
 And there were pettish quarrels, girlish-wise,
 With one or other of the rest at home,
 Oftenest with Leonora, though, I think,
 We chose each other most, and she has kept
 My memory dearest of them ; she alone
 Remembers my old name-day, comes to me,
 As if it still were festival to me,
 With flowers, and calls me Eva.

Does she guess,
 I wonder, that I could have stolen her greatness ?
 Poor Leonora, would she have lost much ?
 Wife's sister to the prince instead of wife ;
 That dowry he designed her for amends,
 To make her welcome to some simpler home —
 Perhaps with love with it, such as *we* hoped
 When we were lovers — Yes, perhaps with some one
 Who could have taught her smiles : she only laughs.
 I would I knew her happy now ! She says
 She is most happy : but she says she knows
 Nothing worth sorrow.

Nothing ! Nothing worth
 The weeping out one's life for ! Nothing worth
 The wearying after in a waking dream
 Of all one's days, the straining to one's heart
 As a mother her one child, her one dead child,
 Although a plague had stricken it and the end
 Were her own dying ! Nothing worth a sorrow
 Dearer than any future joy could be,
 Stronger than love, oh ! longer lived than love,
 Than love itself, a sorrow to be lived for

Like love itself, to be one's closest life!
 If only one were free to sorrow thus!
 Oh to be left my sorrow for a while,
 Only a little while! to weep at will!
 Oh let me weep a while if but for shame
 Because I cannot check the foolish passion,
 Because I weep despite myself. Alas!
 Oh Lord my helper, when shall I find rest?

.

How sweet those roses smell! Look, Angelo,
 That cluster of red roses pictured back
 From the still water. See! see! Catch that branch
 By your left hand — the boat will drift away!
 How the boat rocks! how it rocks! Am I ashore?
 I thought I was in the boat with you. How it rocks!
 Oh Angelo!

What is it? Where am I?
 Who was it screamed? Was it I?
 I have been dreaming —
 How plain it was at first! We in the boat
 On the still lake, just as we were that day,
 The roses drooping on us, and, far spread
 On the clear water, greenness of the trees.
 A strangely real dream! And then the change —
 The tossing waters, I ashore alone
 Watching — and then — Oh! that white anguished face
 Uplifting from the waters as they heaved
 About him sinking!

Whence came such a dream?
 He is with Guilia happy. I —

Am here
 Vowed to the convent, vowed to Heaven's service,
 And happy in the faith of Heaven's reward.
 I have not quite forgotten Whose I am,
 And in the waking day can call to mind

What higher lot is mine and be in it
In peace.

But yet I would I had not seen
That haggard face. I fear me many days
Will find it haunting me. It was too like
The look he gave me when our eyes last met,
When all was over, and there was for us
No farewell but that sudden chance-caught look
In a busy street, and then we had passed on.

The chapel bell at last. Never its sound
Has fallen kinder on my ear. Now comes
The rest of prayer; and so the day begins
Its round of holy duties, and my strength
Will grow again towards them. It will pass,
This querulous weakness with my weariness —
It *has* passed; I am strong; I am myself;
My God did but forsake me for a while.
He hears. He calls me to Him at the shrine.
He will forgive me, me whom He has chosen;
He will fold me in His love. Am I not His?

But yet I would I had not seen that face.

TO ONE OF MANY.

WHAT! wilt thou throw thy stone of malice now,
Thou dare to scoff at him with scorn or blame?
He is a thousand times more great than thou:
Thou, with thy narrower mind and lower aim,
Wilt thou chide him and not be checked by shame?

He hath done evil — God forbid my sight
Should falter where I gaze with loving eye,
That I should fail to know the wrong from right.
He hath done evil — let not any tie
Of birth or love draw moral sense awry.

And though my trust in him is yet full strong
 I may not hold him guiltless, in the dream
 That wrong forgiven is no longer wrong,
 And, looking on his error, fondly deem
 That he in that he erreth doth but *seem*.

I do not soothe me with a vain belief ;
 He hath done evil, therefore is my thought
 Of him made sadness with no common grief.
 But thou, what good or truth has in thee wrought
 That thou shouldst hold thee more than him in aught?

He will redeem his nature, he is great
 In inward purpose past thy power to scan,
 And he will bear his meed of evil fate
 And lift him from his fall a nobler man,
 Hating his error as a great one can.

And what art thou to look on him and say
 ' Ah ! he has fallen whom they praised, but know
 My foot is sure ' ? Upon thy level way
 Are there the perils of the hills of snow ?
 Yea, he has fallen, but wherefore art thou low ?

Speak no light word of him, for he is more
 Than thou canst know — and ever more to me,
 Though he has lessened the first faith I bore,
 Than thou in thy best deeds couldst ever be ;
 Yea, though he fall again, not low like thee.

IN THE STORM.

A WILD rough night : and through the gloomy gray
 One sees the blackness of the headland grow,
 One sees the whiteness of the upflung spray,
 The whiteness of the breakers down below.

A wild wild night : and on the shingly rim
The furious sea-surge roars and frets and rives ;
And far away those black specks, growing dim,
Are tossing with their freights of human lives.

And all the while upon the silent height
The strong white star, beneath the starless sky,
Shines through the dimness of the troubled night,
Shines motionless while the vexed winds hoot by.

Oh ! steadfast light, across dark miles of sea
How many straining eyes whence sleep is chased
Are watching through the midnight-storm for thee
Large glimmering through the haze to the gray waste !

And in the night, fond mothers, scared awake,
And lonely wives, pushing the blind aside,
See thee and bless thee for their sailor's sake,
And thank God thou art there, the dear ship's guide.

Oh ! strong calm star, so watching night by night,
And hour by hour, when storm-winds are astir,
They find thee changeless with thy patient light,
A beacon to the sea-tossed wanderer.

Oh strong and patient ! Once upon my life
Shone such a star, and, when the trouble wave
Reached me and I grew faint with tempest strife,
Through all I saw that hope-star and was brave.

Oh my lost star ! my star that was to me
Instead of sunlight that the happy know !
Oh weary way upon life's trackless sea !
And through the gloom there shines no beacon glow.

THOMAS ASHE.

PSAMATHE.

THE earliest keel, that sowed with snowy foam
 The deep sea-furrows, scared the wondering Nymphs :
 But grown more bold, ere long, they learned to trust
 The white-winged wanderers ; and grew to think
 The rowers' well-timed stroke a pleasant song.
 And curious, — as where not, the sex ? — to pry
 In hidden mysteries, they began to haunt
 The peopled shores and loiter near the ports.
 And many a wonder of the noisy world
 By rumor reached them, or their eyes beheld.

O'er Psamathe there came a strange desire :
 She lounged to hear the music of men's speech,
 And clasp their hands in love. And she forsook
 The sweet sea-cradled sisterhood, her friends :
 Nor missed the quiet bliss of wandering, —
 So many linked together, hand in hand,
 Like wavering sea-flags, — in the depths serene :
 And only pined to compass her delight.

So, glimmering upward to the rosy day,
 And looking wistfully, as birds that wait
 Their comrades, gathering on a northland coast,
 To follow wandering summer on the wing,
 Desire prevailed. And so she gained, ere noon,
 Geræstum. Then, unwearied, skilfully,
 With lithe swift movement made the troubled strait,

Where rugged wave crowds rugged wave, roar,
Between grim Macris' rude unfooted strand
And Attic Sunium's white and wave-cooled foot :
Then took the bold Saronic bay, and found
What seemed the goal ; wind-swept Ænopia ;
Ere sunset faded on the lazy sails.

Chant, weeping, sing, how gladly she beheld
The white-walled houses. Up the rocky bay
Of snowy arm she made an even oar,
By cliff and cave : and in a quiet cove
She found, — whom, hapless ? — Æacus, the king.
O soft, pale lids, with what a fire they burned !
Her heart leaped out toward men, and chose the first.
'Mid whelk and slippery limpet, in the gloom,
She drew the smooth weeds, blue and emerald,
Around her beauty, like a wave-made shroud ;
And, stretched, a waif, upon the strand, she seemed
Some drifted treasure of a wreck forlorn.

So, grave and weighty matter pondering,
The king came nearer and this waif beheld.
And wonderingly he drew the dripping hair, —
Such, haply, he had seen in dreams of old, —
From brine-wet lips, and eyelids of her eyes :
He watched the weed-spread bosom's swell betray
Its fluttering guest : and memory of his sons,
And dead Endeis, and the love of years,
Oblivion sealed, in blushes like a boy's.
No weak misgivings for the future vexed
This amorous king. He took the cloak he wore ;
And spread it on the sand, and daintily
Enwrapped his prize ; and smoothed from sight each limb ;
And bore her lightly in his brawny arms.

She, slumbering on the couch that one time held
The queen Endeis, dared show her blue eyes

Unhooded, to the wondering handmaidens :
 And so they robed her in a queenly way,
 And bound her hair. And then it was the king
 First kissed her on the lips, nor was she loth.
 She held not back, unskilled in maiden guile :
 Yea, even, the well-made vesture, at the first,
 Seemed foolish labor to this wave-nursed one.
 Their ways bewildered, and their speech was strange.
 And so the king was fain to be content
 To have it still unknown what mother bore :
 But yet proclaimed his nuptials in the land ;
 And held a feast, and summoned lordly guests.
 And Telamon and Peleus scorned to come ;
 His sons ; disdainful ; thinking old men's eyes
 Should cease from doting on a maiden's charms.

So, linked with memory and forgetfulness,
 And making old things new, and new things old,
 The seasons, hand in hand, danced round the world.
 Spring shook a beauteous blossom from her urn ;
 A gift for Psamathe, a boy, her flower.
 And she had all she longed for. Speech of men
 Became familiar. Musically fell,
 Now from her lips, now on her ear, its sound.
 She lived content, and trusted in the king.

O weak the tendrils of unwise desire !
 Awhile he loved her, with the love which clings,
 Like flickering fire, round dotage of the old.
 He strove to teach her to be worldly-wise,
 Though Nereids only learn the sweet love-lore.
 But soon the stormier passions of the man
 Outlived its fever, and the charm dissolved.
 Soon, disenchanted of his dreams, he held
 His lingering kindness for a fault to mend ;
 Soon, — as men hate the meek ones whom they wrong, —

Her timorous fondness with rough touch repelled.
Sing, weeping, sing : her bliss is all outworn.

But, as a weak man leans upon a staff,
She trusted in the future. O, as soon
That staff should blossom, as dead love revive !
Ah, child ! the hopeless, withered years, ungreened
With even one leaf ! She could not long have borne
To linger here, where once she yearned to bide.
But since she loved the little prattler well,
Moons filled their horns anew, and new moons waned,
And, — hankering towards the sisters, she endured ;
Yet often, holding fast the tender hand,
Would slink away, to loiter on the shore,
Her blue eyes wandering wistful down the bay.

It fell upon a morning, — when the boy
Would cling about their knees ; and him as well
They hated, for his mother's sake ; — it fell
Upon a morning, in an angry mood,
As hatred hardens men to evil deed,
One hurled a quoit, and smote him on the crown,
And all his brains lay white about the ground.
Yet no-way sorry, they took up the child,
And laid him at the feet of Psamathe :
And none cared, nor the king. Then she at length
Burst into passionate anger, and her words
Thrilled each to marrow of the bones : some god
Inspired her then, to read the wrath foredoomed.
'O mad !' she cried, 'O fools ! whom men think wise !
Whose rule dispenses justice in the land !
Untaught that love is wisdom, and the crown
Of justice pity, and gentleness of man !
And now I see the end, who rue the end ;
Being tender, wishing happy days for all !
O pity, for the sons of these thy sons ;

Of these, thy sons, so apt at slaying sons ;
 Ajax, Achilles, noble ones, both slain ;
 One by the sword which slew his foes, and one
 By treacherous bow-shaft on his bridal morn ! —
 And thou, gray king, — yea ! upright doom of heaven ! —
 Made king in Hades, where no pity dwells,
 Where, found just still, thou shalt be feared and scorned.
 O selfish in your love, O race of men !
 O hearts, more cruel than the dog-fish tooth !
 Words, sweet and false, like easy-falling death !
 Now I will go,' — she wept, — 'now I will go,' —
 Weeping she sighed, — 'who truly much have learned !'
 So she deceived, and undeceived, grown wise,
 On instant fixed her sometime wavering will,
 And crossed the fear-thrilled halls. Nor dared the three
 Obstruct the resolute exit, nor desired.
 But following thief-like, craftily, afar,
 They watched her gain the quiet cove, wherein
 The king first drew salt drift-weed from her eyes ;
 And halting, pensive, where smooth ripples curled,
 Unclasp her girdle ; round her glittering feet
 The fair queen's vesture heedlessly let fall ;
 About her much-wronged beauty, with a smile,
 Unloop the wild profusion of her hair ;
 And slip beneath green waves, and glide away.
 They, wondering, trembled ; and still wondering, gazed ;
 Till they could see no more the snowy arm
 And pearl-white shoulder glancing mid the foam.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

INTELLECTUAL ISOLATION.

I WILL out-soar these clouds, and shake to nought
The doubts that daunt my spirit : that is free,
Invincible by death or destiny ;
Nor need she take of love or friendship thought.
Self-centred, self-sustained, self-guided, fraught
With fervor of the brain enlightening me,
Alone with God upon a shoreless sea,
I 'll find what men in crowds have vainly sought.
I am at one with solitude, and loathe
The tumult of those hopes and fears that fret
Weak hearts in throbbing bosoms. Haply yet
Some Titan vice or virtue shall unclothe
Her mighty limbs for my sole sight, and I,
Sufficing to myself and wisdom, die.

The world of human woe and weal I shun,
Not forasmuch as I despise the joy
That lightens when life wakes in girl or boy,
And glittering sands through passion's hour-glass run ;
Of mortal joys there is not any one
But I have made it for myself the toy
Of fancy, nor hath love had power to cloy
Him who leaves all the deeds of love undone.
Despair of full fruition drives me hence,
Uncomforted to seek repose in God :
Those tyrannous desires that stung my sense

At every turn upon the road I trod,
 Seek their assuagement in a sphere where nought
 Dares to dispute the sovereignty of thought.

Nay, soul, though near to dying, do not this !
 It may be that the world and all its ways
 Seem but spent ashes of extinguished days,
 And love the phantom of imagined bliss :
 Yet what is man among the mysteries
 Whereof the young-eyed angels sang their praise ?
 Thou know'st not. Lone and wildered in the maze,
 See that life's crown thou dost not idly miss.
 Is friendship fickle ? Hast thou found her so ?
 Is God more near thee on that homeless sea
 Than by the hearths where children come and go ?
 Peechance some rotten root of sin in thee
 Hath made thy garden cease to bloom and glow :
 Hast thou no need from thine own self to flee ?

Couldst thou clasp God apart from man, or dwell
 Merged in the ocean of that infinite good
 Where truth and beauty are beatitude,
 This earth might well appear a living hell,
 The prison of damned spirits that rebel,
 Matched with thy paradise of solitude :
 Nathless it is not clasping God to brood
 Upon thine own delusive dreams ; the cell
 Built by an anchorite that strives with fate
 And kindly fellow feeling, may be found
 Like to a maniac's chamber, when too late,
 Abandoned to his will, without or sound
 Or sight of men his brethren, on the ground
 He lies, and all his life is desolate.

It is the centre of the soul that ails :
 We carry with us our own heart's disease ;

And craving the impossible, we freeze
The lively rills of love that never fails.
What faith, what hope will lend the spirit sails
To waft her with a light spray-scattering breeze
From this Calypso isle of phantasies,
Self-sought, self-gendered, where the daylight pales?
Where wandering visions of foregone desires
Pursue her sleepless on a stony strand;
Instead of stars the bleak and baleful fires
Of vexed imagination, quivering spires
That have nor rest nor substance, light the land,
Paced by lean hungry men, a ghostly band!

Oh that the waters of oblivion
Might purge the burdened soul of her life's dross,
Cleansing dark overgrowths that dull the gloss
Wherewith her pristine gold so purely shone!
Oh that some spell might make us dream undone
Those deeds that fret our pillow, when we toss
Racked by the torments of that living cross
Where memory frowns a grim centurion!
Sleep, the kind soother of our bodily smart,
Is bought and sold by scales-weight; quivering nerves
Sink into slumber when the hand of art
Hath touched some hidden spring of brain or heart:
But for the tainted will no medicine serves;
The road from sin to suffering never swerves.

What skill shall anodyne the mind diseased?
Did Rome's fell tyrant cure his secret sore
With those famed draughts of cooling hellebore?
What opiates on the fiends of thought have seized?
This fever of the spirit hath been eased
By no grave simples culled on any shore;
No surgeon's knife, no muttered charm, no lore
Of Phoebus Paian have those pangs appeased.

Herself must be her saviour. Side by side
 Spring poisonous weed and helpful antidote
 Within her tangled herbage; lonely pride
 And humble fellow-service; dreams that dote,
 Deeds that aspire; foul sloth, free labor: she
 Hath power to choose, and what she wills, to be.

AT AMALFI.

HERE might I rest forever; here,
 Till death, inviolate of fear,
 Descended cloud-like on calm eyes,
 Enjoy the whisper of the waves
 Stealing around those azure caves,
 The gloom and glory of the skies!

Great mother, Nature, on thy breast
 Let me, unsoiled by sorrow, rest,
 By sin unstirred, by love made free:
 Full-tried am I by years that bring
 The blossoms of the tardy spring
 Of wisdom, thine adept to be.

In vain I pray: the wish expires
 Upon my lip, as fade the fires
 Of youth in withered veins and weak;
 Not mine to dwell, the neophyte
 Of Nature, in her shrine of light,
 But still to strive and still to seek.

I have outgrown the primal mirth
 That throbs in air and sea and earth;
 The world of worn humanity
 Reclaims my care; at ease to range
 Those hills, and watch their interchange
 Of light and gloom, is not for me.

Dread Pan, to thee I turn : thy soul
That through the living world doth roll,
Stirs in our heart an aching sense
Of beauty, too divinely wrought
To be the food of mortal thought,
For earth-born hunger too intense.

Breathless we sink before thy shrine ;
We pour our spirits forth like wine ;
With trembling hands we strive to lift
The veil of airy amethyst,
That shrouds thy godhood like a mist ;
Then, dying, forth to darkness drift.

Thy life around us laughs, and we
Are merged in its immensity ;
Thy chanted melodies we hear,
The marrying chords that meet and kiss
Between two silences ; but miss
The meaning, though it seems so clear.

From suns that sink o'er silent seas,
From myrtles neath the mountain breeze
Shedding their drift of scented snow,
From fleeting hues, from sounds that swoon
On pathless hills, from night and noon,
The inarticulate passions flow,

That are thy minions, mighty Pan !
No priest hast thou ; no muse or man
Hath ever told, shall ever tell,
But each within his heart alone,
Awe-struck and dumb hath learned to own
The burden of thine oracle.

VINTAGE.

I FOUND him lying neath the vines that ran
 Grape-laden o'er gray frames of oak and beech ;
 A fair and jocund Faun, whose beard began,
 Like dewy down on quince or blushing peach,
 To soften chin and cheek. He bade me reach
 My hand to his, and drew me through the screen
 Of clusters intertwined with glistening green.

Sunrise athwart us fell — a living fire,
 That touching turned our tendrilled roof to red ;
 Network of shade from many a flickering spire
 And solid orb upon the youth was shed ;
 With purple grapes and white his comely head
 Was crowned, and in his hand a bunch he pressed
 Against the golden glory of his breast.

Gourds with the grapes, and hops, and serpentine
 Wreaths of blue bindweed tangling built a bower,
 Where lying we could watch 'twixt vine and vine
 Young men and maidens move, and singing shower
 On wattled crates the fruit whose hoary flower
 With dew still glistened ; for the kiss of night
 Lay yet on vale and mountain misty-bright.

Some trod the press ; some climbed the elms that hung
 Vine-burdened ; and beneath, a beardless boy
 Tuning his melancholy lute-strings sung
 A wild shrill song, that spake of only joy,
 But was so sad that virgins cold and coy
 Melted, and love mid sorrow-sweetness fell
 On careless hearts that felt the powerful spell.

BEATI ILLI.

BLEST is the man whose heart and hands are pure !
He hath no sickness that he shall not cure,
No sorrow that he may not well endure :
His feet are steadfast and his hope is sure.

Oh, blest is he who ne'er hath sold his soul,
Whose will is perfect, and whose word is whole,
Who hath not paid to common sense the toll
Of self-disgrace, nor owned the world's control !

Through clouds and shadows of the darkest night
He will not lose a glimmering of the light,
Nor, though the sun of day be shrouded quite,
Swerve from the narrow path to left or right.

AGNES MARY FRANCES ROBINSON.

THE SCAPE-GOAT.

SHE lived in the hovel alone, the beautiful child.

Alas, that it should have been so !

But her father died of the drink, and the sons went wild ;

And where was the child to go ?

Her brothers left her alone in the lonely hut.

Ah, it was dreary at night

When the wind whistled right through the door that never
would shut,

And sent her sobbing with fright.

She never had slept alone ; for the stifling room

Held her, brothers, father — all.

Ah, better their violence, better their threats, than the
gloom

That now hung close as a pall !

When the hard day's washing was done, it was sweeter to
stand

Harkening praises and vows,

To feel her cold fingers kept warm in a sheltering hand,

Than crouch in the desolate house.

Ah, me ! she was only a child ; and yet so aware

Of the shame which follows on sin.

A poor, lost, terrified child ! she stept in the snare,

Knowing the toils she was in.

Yet, now, when I watch her pass with a heavy reel,
 Shouting her villanous song,
 Is it only pity or shame, do you think, that I feel
 For the infinite sorrow and wrong?

With a sick, strange wonder I ask, Who shall answer the
 sin,
 Thou, lover, brothers of thine?
 Or he who left standing thy hovel to perish in?
 Or I, who gave no sign?

*JÜTZI SCHULTHEISS.*¹⁷

Töss, 1300.

THE gift of God was mine; I lost
 For aye the gift of Pentecost.

.

For seven long years the gift was mine,
 I often saw the angels shine
 Suddenly down the cloister's dark
 Deserted length at night; and oft
 At the high mass I seemed to mark
 A stranger music, high and soft,
 That swam about the heavenly Cup,
 And caught our ruder voices up;
 And often, nay, indeed at will,
 I would lie back and let the still
 Cold trance creep over me — and see
 Mary and all the Saints flash by,
 Till only God was left and I.

The gift of God was mine; I lost
 For aye the gift of Pentecost.

Now sometimes in the summer time
 I stood beneath the orchard trees,
 And in their boughs I heard the breeze
 Keep on a low continuing rhyme,
 And nothing else was heard beside
 The little birds that sang and cried
 Their Latin to the praise of God.
 And under foot new grass I trod,
 And overhead the light was green,
 And all the boughs were starred and gay
 With apple-blossoms in between
 The fresh young leaves as sweet as they.
 And as I looked upon the sun,
 Who made these fair things every one
 To sprout and sing and wax so strong,
 My whole heart turned into a song.
 'For, God,' I thought, 'this sun art Thou,
 And Thou art in the orchard bough,
 And in the grass whereon I tread,
 And in the bird-song overhead,
 And in my soul and limbs and voice,
 And in my heart which must rejoice —
 God!' And my song stopped weak and dazed,
 I seemed upon the very verge
 Of some great brink, wherefrom amazed
 My soul shrank back, lest should emerge
 Thence — Nay, what then? What should I fear?
 I to whom God was known and dear?

Once so possessed with God, I stood
 In prayer within the orchard wood,
 When some one softly called my name,
 And shattered all my happy mood.
 Towards me an ancient Sister came,
 'Quick Jützi, to the hall!' she cried;
 And swiftly after her I hied,

And swiftly reached the convent hall,
Now full of struggle and loud with brawl.

Close to the door aghast I stayed,
Too much indignant and afraid
To ask who wrought this blasphemy.
Then the old nun crept nearer me,
And whispered how some knights to-day,
Riding to Zürich's tourney-fray,
Had craved our shelter and repast,
And how we made the postern fast,
Because they were so rough a crew,
Yet gave them food and rest anew
In the great barn outside the gate;
And how they feasted long and late
Till, drunk, they stormed the postern door,
And sacked the buttery for more.
Nor this the end; for having done,
One shouted 'Nassau;' straightway one
'Hapsburg.' The battle was begun.

She looked at me afraid and faint,
With eyes that mutely begged for aid;
For I was safe and I a saint,
She thought, who was a frightened maid;
And through the clamor and the din
I heard her say, 'They can but sin,
Having not God within their heart;
But we, who have the better part,
Must pray for them to Christ above,
That in the greatness of His love
He pardon them their sins to-day.'
And then she turned her eyes away.
But I looked straight before me where
The unseemly blows and clamors were,
And cold my heart grew, stiff and cold,

For I had prayed so much of old,
 So vainly for these knights-at-arms,
 Who filled the country with alarms —
 Too often had I prayed in vain,
 Too often put myself in pain
 For these irreverent, brawling, rough,
 And godless knights — I had prayed enough !

‘Let God,’ I cried, ‘do all He please ;
 I pray no more for such as these.’
 Then swift I turned and fled, as though
 I fled from sin, and strife, and woe,
 Who fled from God, and from His grace.
 Nor stayed I till I reached the place
 Where I had prayed an hour ago.

I stood again beneath the shade
 The flowering apple-orchard made ;
 The grass was still as tall and green,
 And fresh as ever it had been.
 I heard the little rabbits rush
 As swiftly through the wood ; the thrush
 Was singing still the self-same song,
 Yet something there was changed and wrong.
 Or through the grass or through my heart
 Some deadly thing had passed athwart,
 And left behind a blighting track ;
 For the old peace comes never back.

God knows how I am humbled, how
 There is in all the convent now
 No novice half so weak and poor
 In all esteem as I ; the door
 I keep, and wait on passers-by,
 And lead the cattle out to browse,
 And wash the beggars’ feet ; even I,
 Who was the glory of our house.

Yet dares my soul rejoice because,
 Though I have failed, though I have sinned,
 Not less eternal are the laws
 Of God, no less the sun and wind
 Declare His glory than before,
 Though I am fallen, and faint, and poor.
 Nay should I fall to very Hell,
 Yet am I not so miserable
 As heathen are, who know not Him,
 Who makes all other glories dim.
 O God, believed in still though lost,
 Yet fill me with Thy Holy Ghost—
 Let but the vision fill mine eye
 An instant ere the tear be dry;
 Or, if Thou wilt, keep hid and far,
 Yet art Thou still the secret star
 To which my soul sets all her tides,
 My soul that recks of nought besides.
 Have I not found Thee in the fire
 Of sunset's purple after-glow?
 Have I not found Thee in the throe
 Of anguished hearts that bleed and tire?
 God, once so plain to see and hear,
 Now never answering any tear.
 O God, a guest within my house
 Thou wert, my love thou wert, my spouse;
 Yet never known so well as now
 When the ash whitens on my brow;
 And cinders on my head are tossed,
 Because the gift I had I lost.

LE ROI EST MORT.

AND shall I weep that Love's no more,
 And magnify his reign?
 Sure never mortal man before
 Would have his grief again.
 Farewell the long continued ache,
 The days a-dream, the nights awake,
 I will rejoice and merry make,
 And never more complain.

King Love is dead and gone for aye,
 Who ruled with might and main,
 For with a bitter word one day,
 I found my tyrant slain,
 And he in Heathenesse was bred,
 Nor ever was baptized, 't is said,
 Nor is of any creed, and dead
 Can never rise again.

A CLASSIC LANDSCAPE.

THIS wood might be some Grecian heritage
 Of the antique world, this hoary ilex wood;
 So broad the shade, so deep the solitude,
 So gray the air where Oread fancies brood.

Beyond, the fields are tall with purple sage;
 The sky bends downward like a purple sheet —
 A purple wind-filled sail — i' the noonday heat;
 And past the river shine the fields of wheat.

O tender wheat, O starry saxifrage,
 O deep-red tulips, how the fields are fair!
 Far off the mountains pierce the quivering air,
 Ash-colored, mystical, remote, and bare.

How far they look, the Mountains of Mirage,
 Or northern hills of Heaven, how far away!
 In front the long paulonia blossoms sway
 From leafless boughs across that dreamy gray.

O world, how worthy of a golden age!
 How might Theocritus have sung and found
 The Oreads here, the Naiads gathering round,
 Their pallid locks still dripping to the ground.

For me, O world, thou art how mere a stage,
 Whereon the human soul must play alone,
 In a dead language, with the plot unknown,
 Nor learn what happens when the play is done.

INVOCATIONS.

O SONG in the nightingale's throat, O music,
 Dropt as it fell, by a falling star, —
 All of the silence is filled with thy pain,
 Listening till it shall echo again.

O song in the nightingale's throat, O music,
 Thou art the soul of the silence afar!

O space of the moon in the starless heaven,
 Raining a whiteness on moorland and sea,
 Falling as lightly and purely as dew,
 All of the shadow thou filterest through —
 O space of the moon in the starless heaven,
 Surely the night is the shadow of thee!

O silence of Death, O world of darkness,
 When over me the last shadow shall fall,
 Holdest thou safe in the night all around
 Any moon to arise, any music to sound?
 O silence of Death, O world of darkness,
 Shall we perceive thee, or know thee at all?

REMEMBRANCE.

O NIGHT of death, O night that bringest all,
Night full of dreams and large with promises,
O night, that holdest on thy shadowy knees
Sleep for all fevers, hope for every thrall;
Bring thou to her for whom I wake and call,
Bring her when I am dead, for memories
Our vanished love, and all our vanished ease;
And I shall live again beneath the pall !

Then let my face, pale as a waning moon,
Rise on thy dark and be again as dear ;
Let my dead voice find its forgotten tune
And strike again as sweetly in her ear,
As when, upon my lips, one far-off June,
Thy name — O Death — she could not brook to hear.

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

WOODSTOCK MAZE.

- ‘O NEVER shall any one find you then!’
Said he, merrily pinching her cheek;
‘But why?’ she asked, — he only laughed, —
‘Why shall it be thus, now speak!’
‘Because so like a bird art thou,
Thou must live within green trees,
With nightingales and thrushes and wrens,
And the humming of wild bees.’
*Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.*
- ‘Nay, nay, you jest, no wren am I,
Nor thrush nor nightingale,
And rather would keep this arras and wall
’Tween me and the wind’s assail.
I like to hear little Minnie’s gay laugh,
And the whistle of Japes the page,
Or to watch old Madge when her spindle twirls,
And she tends it like a sage.’
*Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.*
- ‘Yea, yea, but thou art the world’s best Rose,
And about thee flowers I’ll twine,
And wall thee round with holly and beech,
Sweet-briar and jessamine.’

‘Nay, nay, sweet master, I ’m no Rose,
 But a woman indeed, indeed,
 And love many things both great and small,
 And of many things more take heed.’
Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.

‘Aye, sweetheart, sure thou sayest sooth,
 I think thou art even so!
 But yet needs must I dibble the hedge,
 Close serried as hedge can grow.
 Then Minnie and Japes and Madge shall be
 Thy merry-mates all day long,
 And thou shalt hear my bugle-call
 For matin or even-song.’
Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.

‘Look yonder now, my blue-eyed bird,
 See’st thou aught by yon far stream?
 There shalt thou find a more curious nest
 Than ever thou sawest in dream.’
 She followed his finger, she looked in vain,
 She saw neither cottage nor hall,
 But at his beck came a litter on wheels,
 Screened by a red silk caul;
 He lifted her in by her lily-white hand,
 So left they the blithe sunny wall.
Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.

The gorse and ling are netted and strong,
 The conies leap everywhere,
 The wild briar-roses by runnels grow thick;
 Seems never a pathway there.
 Then come the dwarf oaks knotted and wrung
 Breeding apples and mistletoe,

And now tall elms from the wet mossed ground
Straight up to the white clouds go.
*Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.*

‘O weary hedge, O thorny hedge!’
Quoth she in her lonesome bower,
‘Round and round it is all the same;
Days, weeks, have all one hour;
I hear the cushat far overhead,
From the dark heart of that plane;
Sudden rushes of wings I hear,
And silence as sudden again.
*Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.*

‘Maiden Minnie she mopes by the fire,
Even now in the warmth of June;
I like not Madge to look in my face,
Japes now hath never a tune.
But, oh, he is so kingly strong,
And, oh, he is kind and true;
Shall not my babe, if God cares for me,
Be his pride and his joy too?
*Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.*

‘I lean my faint heart against this tree
Whereon he hath carved my name,
I hold me up by this fair bent bough,
For he held once by the same;
But everything here is dank and cold,
The daisies have sickly eyes,
The clouds like ghosts down into my prison
Look from the barred-out skies.
*Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.*

I tune my lute and I straight forget
 What I minded to play, woe 's me !
 Till it feebly moans to the sharp short gusts
 Aye rushing from tree to tree.
 Often that single redbreast comes
 To the sill where my Jesu stands ;
 I speak to him as to a child ; he flies,
 Afraid of these poor thin hands !
Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.

'The golden evening burns right through
 My dark chamber windows twain :
 I listen, all round me is only a grave,
 Yet listen I ever again.
 Will he come ? I pluck the flower-leaves off,
 And at each, cry, yes, no, yes !
 I blow the down from the dry hawkweed,
 Once, twice, ah ! it flyeth amiss !
Oh, the shower and the sunshine every day
Pass and pass, be ye sad, be ye gay.

'Hark ! he comes ! yet his footstep sounds
 As it sounded never before !
 Perhaps he thinks to steal on me,
 But I'll hide behind the door.'
 She ran, she stopped, stood still as stone —
 It was Queen Eleānore ;
 And at once she felt that it was death
 The hungering she-wolf bore !
Oh, the leaves, brown, yellow, and red, still fall,
Fall and fall over churchyard or hall.

SAINT MARGARET.

THE wan lights freeze on the dark cold floor,
Witch lights and green the high windows adorn ;
The cresset is gone out the altar before,
She knows her long hour of life 's nigh worn,
And she kneels here waiting to be re-born,
On the stones of the chancel.

' That door darkly golden, that noiseless door,
Through which I can see sometimes,' said she,
' Will it ever be opened to close no more ;
Will those wet clouds cease pressing on me ;
Shall I cease to hear the sound of the sea ? '

Her handmaids miss her and rise.

' I 've served in life's prison-house long,' she said,
' Where silver and gold are heavy and bright,
Where children wail and where maidens wed,
Where the day is wearier than the night,
And each would be master if he might.'

Margaret ! they seek thee.

The night waxed darker than before ;
Scarce could the windows be traced at all,
Only the sharp rain was heard rushing o'er ;
A sick sleeper moaned through the cloister wall,
And a horse neighed shrill from a distant stall,
And the sea sounded on.

' Are all the dear holy ones shut within,
That none descend in my strait ? ' said she ;
' Their songs are afar off, far off and thin,
The terrible sounds of the prison-house flee
About me, and the sound of the sea.'

Lights gleam from room to room.

Slowly a moonshine breaks over the glass,
 The black and green witchcraft is there no more ;
 It spreads and it brightens, and out of it pass
 Four angels with glorified hair, — all four
 With lutes ; and our Lord is in heaven's door.
 Margaret ! they hail thee.

Her eyes are a-wide to the hallowèd light,
 Her head is cast backward, her bosom is clad
 With the flickering moonlight pale-purple and white ;
 Away to the angels her spirit hath fled,
 While her body still kneels, — but is it not dead ?
 She is safe, she is well !

PARTING AND MEETING AGAIN.

LAST time I parted from my dear
 The linnet sang from the briar-bush,
 The throstle from the dell ;
 The stream too carolled full and clear,
 It was the spring-time of the year,
 And both the linnet and the thrush
 I love them well,
 Since last I parted from my dear.

But when he came again to me
 The barley rustled high and low,
 Linnet and thrush were still ;
 Yellowed the apple on the tree,
 'T was autumn merry as it could be,
 What time the white ships come and go
 Under the hill ;
 They brought him back again to me,
 Brought him safely o'er the sea.

OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE.

I.

BIRTH.

I STOOD before the veil of the Unknown,
And round me in this life's dim theatre
Was gathered a whole townfolk, all astir
With various interludes: I watched alone,
And saw a great hand lift the veil, then shone,
Descending from the innermost expanse,
A goddess to whose eyes my heart at once
Flew up with awe and love, a love full-blown.

Naked and white she was, her fire-girt hair
Eddied on either side her straight high head,
Swaddled within her arms in lambent flame,
An unborn life, a child-soul, did she bear,
And laid it on a young wife's breast and fled,
Yet no one wondered whence the strange gift came!

II.

DEATH.

AGAIN that stage was vacant, that dusk crowd
Was murmuring as before: again that hand
Gathered the curtain; I saw rise and stand
Against the inmost blackness like a cloud,
No feature seen, but o'er his brows a proud
Spiked crown that held the thick mist clothing him,
'A strong imperious creature, tall and slim,
And hateful too, thus hid within that shroud.

Stooping he raised within his long thin arms
A scared old man and rolled him up, and fled:

And all the crowd shrieked out, and muttering charms,
 Threw down their fiddle-bows and merchandise, —
 Around the stark corpse knelt with suppliant cries,
 Nor ceased still wondering where was gone — the dead !

PARTED LOVE.

EVENING.

As in a glass at evening, dusky-gray,
 The faces of those passing through the room
 Seen like ghost-transits thwart reflected gloom,
 Thus, darling image ! thou, so long away,
 Visitest sometimes my darkening day :
 Other friends come ; the toy of life turns round,
 The glittering beads change with their tinkling sound,
 Whilst thou in endless youth sit'st silently.

How vain to call time back, to think these arms
 Again may touch, may shield, those shoulders soft
 And solid, never more my eyes can see ;
 But yet, perchance — (*speak low*) — beyond all harms,
 I may walk with thee in God's other croft,
 When this world shall the darkling mirror be.

PYGMALION.

‘ MISTRESS of gods and men ! I have been thine
 From boy to man, and many a myrtle rod
 Have I made grow upon thy sacred sod,
 Nor ever have I passed thy white shafts nine
 Without some votive offering for the shrine,
 Carved beryl or chased bloodstone ; — aid me now,
 And I will live to fashion for thy brow
 Heart-breaking priceless things : O, make her mine.’

Venus inclined her ear, and through the Stone
Forthwith slid warmth like spring through sapling-stems,
And lo, the eyelid stirred, beneath had grown
The tremulous light of life, and all the hems
Of her zoned peplos shook — upon his breast,
She sank by two dread gifts at once oppressed.

ARTHUR WILLIAM EDGAR O'SHAUGH-
NESSY.

ODE.

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams ; —
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams :
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory :
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown ;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth ;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth ;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation ;
 A wondrous thing of our dreaming
 Unearthly, impossible seeming —
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
 Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
 And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising ;
 They had no divine foreshowing
 Of the land to which they are going :
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
 A light that doth not depart ;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
 Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling ;
 And the multitudes are enlisted
 In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
 Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
 The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
 Ceaseless and sorrowless we !
The glory about us clinging
 Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing :
 O men ! it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
 A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
 And the suns that are not yet high,
 And out of the infinite morning
 Intrepid you hear us cry —
 How, spite of your human scorning,
 Once more God's future draws nigh,
 And already goes forth the warning
 That ye of the past must die.

Great hail! we cry to the comers
 From the dazzling unknown shore;
 Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
 And renew our world as of yore;
 You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
 And things that we dreamed not before:
 Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
 And a singer who sings no more.

OUTCRY.

IN all my singing and speaking,
 I send my soul forth seeking:
 O soul of my soul's dreaming,
 When wilt thou hear and speak?
 Sorely and lonely seeming,
 Thou art there in my dreaming;
 Hast thou no sorrow for speaking?
 Hast thou no dream to seek?

In all my thinking and sighing,
 In all my desolate crying,
 I send my heart forth yearning,
 O heart that mayst be nigh!
 Like a bird weary of flying,
 My heavy heart, returning,

Bringeth me no replying,
Of word, or thought, or sigh.

In all my joying and grieving,
Living, hoping, believing,
I send my love forth flowing,
To find my unknown love.
O world that I am leaving,
O heaven where I am going,
Is there no finding and knowing,
Around, within, or above?

O soul of my soul's seeing,
O heart of my heart's being,
O love of dreaming and waking
And living and dying for —
Out of my soul's last aching,
Out of my heart just breaking —
Doubting, falling, forsaking,
I call on you this once more.

Are you too high or too lowly
To come at length unto me?
Are you too sweet or too holy
For me to have and to see?
Wherever you are, I call you,
Ere the falseness of life enthrall you,
Ere the hollow of death appal you,
While yet your spirit is free.

Have you not seen, in sleeping,
A lover that might not stay,
And remembered again with weeping,
And thought of him through the day? —
Ah! thought of him long and dearly,
Till you seemed to behold him clearly,

And could follow the dull time merely
With heart and love far away?

Have you not known him kneeling
To a deathless vision of you,
Whom only an earth was concealing,
Whom all that was heaven proved true?
O surely some wind gave motion
To his words like a wave of the ocean;
Ay! so that you felt his devotion,
And smiled, and wondered, and knew.

And what are you thinking and saying,
In the land where you are delaying?
Have you a chain to sever?
Have you a prison to break?
O love! there is one love forever,
And never another love — never;
And hath it not reached you, my praying
And singing these years for your sake?

We two, made one, should have power
To grow to a beautiful flower,
A tree for men to sit under
Beside life's flowerless stream:
But I without you am only
A dreamer, fruitless and lonely;
And you without me, a wonder
In my most beautiful dream.

*TO A YOUNG MURDERESS.*¹⁸

FAIR, yellow murderess, whose gilded head
Gleaming with deaths; whose deadly body white,
Writ o'er with secret records of the dead;
Whose tranquil eyes, that hide the dead from sight

Down in their tenderest depth and bluest bloom ;
Whose strange unnatural grace ; whose prolonged youth —
Are for my death now and the shameful doom
Of all the man I might have been in truth —

Your fell smile, sweetened still, lest I might shun
Its lingering murder, with a kiss for lure,
Is like the fascinating steel that one
Most vengeful in his last revenge and sure
The victim lies beneath him, passes slow,
Again and oft again before his eyes
And over all his frame, that he may know
And suffer the whole death before he dies.

Will you not slay me ? Stab me ; yea, somehow
Deep in the heart : say some foul word to last
And let me hate you as I love you now :
Oh, would I might but see you turn and cast
That false fair beauty that you e'en shall lose,
And fall down there and writhe about my feet,
The crooked loathly viper I shall bruise
Through all eternity ! —

Nay ; kiss me, Sweet !

ROBERT BULWER, EARL OF LYTTON.

MADAME LA MARQUISE.

THE folds of her wine-dark violet dress
 Glow over the sofa, fall on fall,
 As she sits in the air of her loveliness,
 With a smile for each and for all.

Half of her exquisite face in the shade
 Which o'er it the screen in her soft hand flings :
 Through the gloom glows her hair in its odorous braid :
 In the firelight are sparkling her rings.

As she leans, — the slow smile half shut up in her eyes
 Beams the sleepy, long, silk-soft lashes beneath ;
 Through her crimson lips, stirred by her faint replies,
 Breaks one gleam of her pearl-white teeth.

As she leans, — where your eye, by her beauty subdued,
 Droops — from under warm fringes of broidery white
 The slightest of feet — silken-slippered, protrude,
 For one moment, then slip out of sight.

As I bend o'er her bosom, to tell her the news,
 The faint scent of her hair, the approach of her cheek,
 The vague warmth of her breath, all my senses suffuse
 With HERSELF : and I tremble to speak.

So she sits in the curtained, luxurious light
 Of that room, with its porcelain, and pictures, and flowers,
 When the dark day's half done, and the snow flutters white,
 Past the windows in feathery showers.

All without is so cold, — 'neath the low leaden sky!
Down the bald, empty street, like a ghost, the gendarme
Stalks surly: a distant carriage hums by: —
All within is so bright and so warm!

Here we talk of the schemes and the scandals of court,
How the courtesan pushes: the charlatan thrives:
We put horns on the heads of our friends, just for sport:
Put intrigues in the heads of their wives.

Her warm hand, at parting, so strangely thrilled mine,
That at dinner I scarcely remark what they say, —
Drop the ice in my soup, spill the salt in my wine,
Then go yawn at my favorite play.

But she drives after noon; — then 's the time to behold her,
With her fair face, half hid, like a ripe peeping rose,
'Neath that veil, — o'er the velvets and furs which enfold
her,
Leaning back with a queenly repose, —

As she glides up the sunlight! — you'd say she was made
To loll back in a carriage, all day, with a smile,
And at dusk, on a sofa, to lean in the shade
Of soft lamps, and be wooed for a while.

Could we find out her heart through that velvet and lace!
Can it beat without ruffling her sumptuous dress?
She will show us her shoulder, her bosom, her face;
But what the heart's like, we must guess.

With live women and men to be found in the world —
(— Live with sorrow and sin, — live with pain and with
passion, —)
Who could live with a doll, though its locks should be
curled,
And its petticoats trimmed in the fashion?

'T is so fair ! — would my bite, if I bit it, draw blood ?
 Will it cry if I hurt it ? or scold if I kiss ?
 Is it made, with its beauty, of wax or of wood ?
 — Is it worth while to guess at all this ?

THE CHESS-BOARD.

My little love, do you remember,
 Ere we were grown so sadly wise,
 Those evenings in the bleak December,
 Curtained warm from the snowy weather,
 When you and I played chess together,
 Checkmated by each other's eyes ?

Ah, still I see your soft white hand
 Hovering warm o'er Queen and Knight.
 Brave Pawns in valiant battle stand.
 The double Castles guard the wings :
 The Bishop, bent on distant things,
 Moves, sidling through the fight.

Our fingers touch ; our glances meet,
 And falter ; falls your golden hair
 Against my cheek ; your bosom sweet
 Is heaving. Down the field, your Queen
 Rides slow her soldiery all between,
 And checks me unaware.

Ah me ! the little battle's done,
 Disperst is all its chivalry ;
 Full many a move, since then, have we
 'Mid life's perplexing checkers made,
 And many a game with Fortune played, —
 What is it we have won ?
 This, this at least — if this alone ; —

That never, never, nevermore,
As in those old still nights of yore
(Ere we were grown so sadly wise),
Can you and I shut out the skies,
Shut out the world, and wintry weather,
And, eyes exchanging warmth with eyes,
Play chess, as then we played, together!

FROM 'LUCILE.'¹⁹

FROM CANTO IV.

ALAS, friend! what boots it, a stone at his head
And a brass on his breast, — when a man is once dead?
Ay! were fame the sole guerdon, poor guerdon were then
Theirs who, stripping life bare, stand forth models for men.
The reformer's? — a creed by posterity learnt
A century after its author is burnt!
The poet's? — a laurel that hides the bald brow
It hath blighted! The painter's? — ask Raphael now
Which Madonna's authentic! The statesman's? — a name
For parties to blacken, or boys to declaim!
The soldier's? — three lines on the cold Abbey pavement!
Were this all the life of the wise and the brave meant,
All it ends in, thrice better, Neacra, it were
Unregarded to sport with thine odorous hair,
Untroubled to lie at thy feet in the shade
And be loved, while the roses yet bloom overhead,
Than to sit by the lone hearth, and think the long thought,
A severe, sad, blind schoolmaster, envied for naught
Save the name of John Milton! For all men, indeed,
Who in some choice edition may graciously read,
With fair illustration, and erudite note,
The song which the poet in bitterness wrote,
Beat the poet, and notably beat him, in this —

The joy of the genius is theirs, whilst they miss
 The grief of the man: Tasso's song, — not his madness !
 Dante's dreams, — not his waking to exile and sadness !
 Milton's music, — but not Milton's blindness ! — yet rise,
 My Milton, and answer, with those noble eyes
 Which the glory of heaven hath blinded to earth !
 Say — the life, in the living it, savors of worth :
 That the deed, in the doing it, reaches its aim :
 That the fact has a value apart from the fame :
 That a deeper delight, in the mere labor, pays
 Scorn of lesser delights, and laborious days :
 And Shakespeare, though all Shakespeares's writings were
 lost,
 And his genius, though never a trace of it crossed
 Posterity's path, not the less would have dwelt
 In the isle with Miranda, with Hamlet have felt
 All that Hamlet hath uttered, and haply where pure
 On its death-bed wronged Love lay, have moaned with the
 Moor !

EMILY PFEIFFER.

BROKEN LIGHT.

It was cruel of them to part
Two hearts in the gladsome spring,
Two lovers' hearts that had just burst forth
With each blithe and beautiful thing;
Cruel, but only half —
Had they known how to do us wrong,
They had barred the way of the odorous May,
They had shut out the wild bird's song.

Your kisses were so embalmed
With spices of beech and fir,
That they haunt my lips in the dead o' the night,
If the night-winds do but stir;
When I rise with the rising dawn,
To let in the dewy south,
Like a fountain spray, or the pride of the day,
They fall on my thirsty mouth.

They should never have let our love
Abroad in the wild free woods,
If they meant it to slumber on, cold and tame,
As the locked-up winter floods;
They should never have let it hide
'Neath the beeches' lucent shade,
Or the upturned arch of the tender larch
That blushed as it heaved and swayed.

Now the young and passionate year
 Is no longer itself, but *you*;
 Its conniving woods, with their raptures and thrills,
 You have leavened them through and through.
 The troubadour nightingale
 And the dove that o'erbends the bough,
 Have both learnt, and teach, the trick of your speech,
 As they echo it vow for vow.

My heart is heavy with scorn,
 Mine eyes with impatient tears,
 But the heaven looks blue through the cherry-blooms,
 And preaches away my fears !
 From the burning bush of the gorse,
 Alive with murmurous sound,
 I hear a voice, and it says, ' Rejoice !'
 I stand as on holy ground.

O flower of life ! O Love !
 God's love is at thy root ;
 They may dim thy glory, but cannot blight
 Or hinder thy golden fruit.
 Yet all the same, I am mad,
 However the end may fall,
 That they dare to wring, in the glad some spring,
 Two hearts that were gladdest of all.

TO NATURE.

IN HER ASCRIBED CHARACTER OF UNMEANING AND ALL-
 PERFORMING FORCE.

O NATURE ! thou whom I have thought to love,
 Seeing in thine the reflex of God's face,
 A loathed abstraction would usurp thy place, —
 With Him they not dethrone, they but disprove.
 Weird Nature ! can it be that joy is fled,

And bald unmeaning lurks beneath thy smile?
 That beauty haunts the dust but to beguile,
 And that with Order, Love and Hope are dead?
 Pitiless Force, all-moving, all unmoved,
 Dread mother of unfathered worlds, assuage
 Thy wrath on us, — be this wild life reprov'd,
 And trampled into nothing in thy rage!
 Vain prayer, although the last of human kind, —
 Force is not wrath, — but only deaf and blind.

Dread force, in whom of old we loved to see
 A nursing mother, clothing with her life
 The seeds of Love divine, with what sore strife
 We hold or yield our thoughts of Love and thee!
 Thou art not 'calm,' but restless as the ocean,
 Filling with aimless toil the endless years —
 Stumbling on thought, and throwing off the spheres, —
 Churning the Universe with mindless motion.
 Dull fount of joy, unhallowed source of tears,
 Cold motor of our fervid faith and song,
 Dead, but engendering life, love, pangs, and fears,
 Thou crownedst thy wild work with foulest wrong
 When first thou lightedst on a seeming goal,
 And darkly blundered on man's suffering soul.

Blind Cyclop, hurling stones of destiny,
 And not in fury! — working bootless ill,
 In mere vacuity of mind and will —
 Man's soul revolts against thy work and thee!
 Slaves of a despot, conscienceless and *nill*,
 Slaves, by mad chance be fooled to think them free,
 We still might rise, and with one heart agree
 To mar the ruthless 'grinding of thy mill!' —
 Dead tyrant, tho' our cries and groans pass by thee,
 Man, cutting off from each new 'tree of life'
 Himself, its fatal flower, could still defy thee,

In waging on thy work eternal strife, —
 The races come and coming evermore,
 Heaping with hecatombs thy dead-sea shore.

If we be fools of chance, indeed, and tend
 No whither, than the blinder fools in this :
 That, loving good, we live, in scorn of bliss,
 Its wageless servants to the evil end.
 If, at the last, man's thirst for higher things
 Be quenched in dust, the giver of his life,
 Why press with glowing zeal a hopeless strife, —
 Why — born for creeping — should he dream of wings?
 O Mother Dust ! thou hast one law so mild,
 We call it sacred — all thy creatures own it —
 The tie which binds the parent and the child, —
 Why has man's loving heart alone outgrown it?
 Why hast thou travailed so to be denied?
 So trampled by a would-be matricide?

THE STING OF DEATH.

O THOU whom men affirm we cannot know,
 It may be we may never see Thee nearer
 Than 'in the clouds,' nor ever trace Thee clearer
 Than in that garment which, howe'er aglow
 With love divine, is still a changing show,
 A little shadowing forth, and more concealing,
 A glory which, in uttermost revealing,
 Might strike us dead with one supreme life-blow.
 We may not reach Thee through the void immense
 Measured by suns, or prove Thee anywhere,
 But hungry eyes that hunt the wilds above
 For one lost face, still drop despairing thence
 To find Thee in the heart — life's ravished lair —
 Else were the 'sting of death' not sin, but love !

THE GOSPEL OF DREAD TIDINGS.

IF that sad creed which honest men and true
Are flouting in the cheerful face of Day,
Are teaching in the schools, and by the way, —
Tho' only guesses on a broken clue, —
If such should in the end quench all the blue
Above us, then the saddest souls were they
Who knew and loved the best, and could not lay
The ghost of Hope, and hold the grave in lieu.
O Christ, Thou highest man ! if it were so,
And Thou couldst see it, that great heart of Thine
Would burn to come amongst us, — not to preach
Thy law again, or set our loves a-glow,
Still less in glory, — but to blot each line,
Each thought, each word, Thou camest first to teach.

EVOLUTION.

HUNGER that strivest in the restless arms
Of the sea-flower, that drivest rooted things
To break their moorings, that unfoldest wings
In creatures to be wrapt above thy harms ;
Hunger, of whom the hungry-seeming waves
Were the first ministers, till, free to range,
Thou madest the Universe thy park and grange,
What is it thine insatiate heart still craves ?
Sacred disquietude, divine unrest !
Maker of all that breathes the breath of life,
No unthrift greed spurs thine unflagging zest,
No lust self-slaying, hounds thee to the strife ;
Thou art the Unknown God on whom we wait :
Thy path the course of our unfolded fate.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

FALSE REST AND TRUE REST.

‘AND thou hast taken from me my fair faith,
Which like a star lit the waste night of death —
A light I thought no blast could ever kill.
O friend of mine, was it with me so ill
To fancy that my lips when void of breath
Should open in that land one entereth
Through portals of the grave — how dark, how chill?

‘What hast thou set me in my dear hope’s place
But thy stern truth, with white, implacable face,
Cold eyes, shut lips, clenched hand, and barren breast?
I stand, of all my sweet faith dispossessed —
Discrowned of my belief. Death hath no grace,
But seems a thing to shudder at. My days
Are joyless and my nights are void of rest.

‘I thought that I, in some far paradise,
Should hear the old, sweet voices, and that eyes
Of those I loved and lost my eyes should greet.
O visionary fields that felt the feet
Of my impatient thought, which no more flies
From you to me, but in my cold heart lies
Quite cold and dead, once warm with my heart’s heat.

‘O, life was full of comfort in those years;
Sweet things I dreamed of the impossible spheres,
I had a haven. If the winds were strong,

Above their roar I caught from far the song
Of beckoning angels. Now no light appears —
No song at all, my heart, desirous, hears ;
The day is short, but O the night is long !

‘ O long, O dreary long, that night of death !
No dawn it hath, no star that lighteneth.
There comes no love, no passionate memory
Of all the dear delights that used to be.
Shall one see God there, lying without breath ;
Or shall the dead give thanks ? the psalmist saith,
Nay, if the dead thank, they thank silently.

‘ There is no dreariness in death for one
Who sets his eyes on Truth, that cold, calm sun,
By whose impartial and unvarying light
Men might walk surely, who now grope in night.
Who fears, when labor of the day is done,
To rest and sleep ? Then wherefore should ye shun
The sleep no dream, no waking, come to spite ?

‘ Lift up and fix on truth thy timorous eyes,
Till they can tolerate her awful skies.
Thy rest was warm and sweet, but could it save ?
Would thy hope’s torch have lasted to the grave ?
How suddenly the grim mistrusts arise —
“ My soul, wilt thou find hell or paradise ?
Pray, dear life, keep me till I grow more brave.

‘ “ Oh mighty mystery of mysteries,
I venture forth upon the unsailed seas.
I go to face the awful, the unknown ;
Oh Death, how full of terror art thou grown !
I trust I go to lands of perfect peace,
Wherein are all the mighty companies,
Of the illustrious dead, and those my own.

"My own, whose loss was such sharp gall to drink.
 I trust! Yet what are we, that we should think
 Eternal peace and rapture must be ours?
 Again by fear appalled my spirit cowers
 In abject terror on the grave's dark brink.
 Can I believe that through a coffin-chink
 From dust of me it breaks anew and flowers?

"But nay, I do believe and will attest
 That God is good, and on my Saviour's breast
 I shall lie safely, when this life is over" —
 So say thy lips; but thy soul sees above her
 No visible heaven of deep joy and rest;
 She knoweth not the end of her long quest,
 And deathly fears once more about her hover.

'Youth, being eager, may be confident
 Of things it really knows not; well content
 False rest to follow, and to feed on lies;
 But will these for the later years suffice?
 I speak not of the unintelligent,
 Who go, like sheep, the way their leader went,
 But of those souls who have, and use, their eyes.

'That music which of old so loud did seem
 Comes faint, as from a dawn-receding dream.
 How has it paled — thy hope of future bliss!
 Lo, by chill winds thy light extinguished is —
 Not quite, for by its fluctuating gleam,
 Its little, wandering, insufficient beam,
 Death has a ghastly look, not really his.

'Were it not best all thought to concentrate
 Upon this life in which we work, and wait,
 And love, and grieve, and bear. Life is a day,
 And death the night that follows it? Nay, nay,
 If, when our days of toil we terminate,

We go to be a very part of fate,
Or, no end serving, simply pass away.

‘How shall death be, or night be, when we know not
That life has ceased in us; that wild winds blow not
For us again; for us no more the sun
Fulfil the earth, when winter-time is done;
For us the tender things of Spring they show not;
For us the birds are mute, the rivers flow not —
What pain is there in this sweet dissolution?

‘A slothful soul, in time of war I slept,
While other men their dangerous outposts kept;
And when you did command me to arise,
And with the light and air familiarize
My spiritual senses, I had crept
Back to my lair, by wholesome winds unswept,
Had you not fixed on Truth my coward eyes.

‘If life be full of comfort, fair and sweet,
I will be meekly thankful that my feet
Are spared the stones that wound, and as I may
Try to make smooth for others a rougher way;
But should life bitter prove, and incomplete,
This pain of living it is very fleet,
And rest will come with quiet set of day.

‘I feel an ardor never felt till now —
A stimulus to work, to keep the vow
I take to help each weary woman and man.
There was no room before in my life’s plan
For this — my dreams and visions filled it so;
But now I know the way my soul shall go,
Shall I not use it here as best I can?

‘Death holds no longer any fear for me,
Now that my hopes and doubts cease equally.

I know, at length, the place I journey to,
 I know the work in life I have to do.
 This rest of ours is true rest, verily.
 O power of undeniable Truth, set free
 All souls that from false rest a false joy drew.'

BEYOND REACH.

DEAR Love, thou art so far above my song,
 It is small wonder that it fears to rise,
 Knowing it cannot reach my Paradise ;
 Yet ever to dwell here my thoughts among,
 Nor try its upward flight would do thee wrong.
 What time the lark soars singing to the skies,
 We know he falters, know the sweet song dies,
 That fain would reach Heaven's gate sustained and strong.

But angels bending from the shining brink
 Catch the faint note, and know the poor song fails,
 Having no strength to reach their heavenly height ;
 So listen thou, beloved, and so think.
 More for the earth than Heaven his song avails,
 Yet sweetest heard when nearest to God's light.

BESIDE THE DEAD.

SAD seems the room, and strangely still, where lies
 Some form quite motionless, in which of late
 Glad life exulted. Mark the changed estate,
 The helpless hands, clasped now in peaceful wise,
 The speechless lips, and unbeholding eyes
 Which might not look into the eyes of Fate ;
 And as about the bed you watching wait,
 What pleading pity to your spirit cries !

But, surely, yet a sadder thing is this,
 To look upon Love's face, where Love lies dead,
 While all his memories of pain and bliss,
 Thorn-crowned and rose-crowned, watch beside the bed.
 Gone souls *may* live again, no man can tell;
 But dead Love shall *not* break Death's awful spell.

BRIDAL EVE.

HALF robed, with gold hair drooped o'er shoulders white,
 She sits as one entranced, with eyes that gaze
 Upon the mirrowed beauties of her face;
 And through the distances of dark and light
 She hears faint music of the coming night;
 She hears the murmurs of receding days;
 Her future life is veiled in such a haze
 As hides, on sultry morns, the sun from sight.

Upon the brink of imminent change she stands,
 Glad, yet afraid to look beyond the verge;
 She starts, as at the touch of unseen hands;
 Love's music grows half anthem and half dirge.
 Strange sounds and shadows round her spirit fall,
 Yet to herself she stranger seems than all.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

DREAM-LAND.

WHERE sunless rivers weep
 Their waves into the deep,
 She sleeps a charmèd sleep :
 Awake her not.
 Led by a single star,
 She came from very far
 To seek where shadows are
 Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
 She left the fields of corn,
 For twilight cold and lorn
 And water springs.
 Through sleep, as through a veil,
 She sees the sky look pale,
 And hears the nightingale
 That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest
 Shed over brow and breast ;
 Her face is toward the west,
 The purple land.
 She cannot see the grain
 Ripening on hill and plain ;
 She cannot feel the rain
 Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore
Upon a mossy shore ;
Rest, rest at the heart's core
Till time shall cease :
Sleep that no pain shall wake,
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
Her perfect peace.

BIRD RAPTURES.

THE sunrise wakes the lark to sing,
The moonrise wakes the nightingale.
Come darkness, moonrise, everything
That is so silent, sweet, and pale :
Come, so ye wake the nightingale.

Make haste to mount, thou wistful moon,
Make haste to wake the nightingale :
Let silence set the world in tune
To hearken to that wordless tale
Which warbles from the nightingale.

O herald skylark, stay thy flight
One moment, for a nightingale
Floods us with sorrow and delight.
To-morrow thou shalt hoist the sail ;
Leave us to-night the nightingale.

AMOR MUNDI.

' O WHERE are you going with your love-locks flowing,
On the west wind blowing along this valley track ? '
' The downhill path is easy, come with me an it please ye,
We shall escape the uphill by never turning back.'

So they two went together in glowing August weather,
 The honey-breathing heather lay to their left and right;
 And dear she was to doat on, her swift feet seemed to float
 on
 The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to alight.

‘Oh, what is that in heaven where gray cloud-flakes are
 seven,
 Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the rainy skirt?’
 ‘Oh, that’s a meteor sent us, a message dumb, portentous,
 An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.’

‘Oh, what is that glides quickly where velvet flowers grow
 thickly,
 Their scent comes rich and sickly?’—‘A scaled and
 hooded worm.’
 ‘Oh, what’s that in the hollow, so pale I quake to follow?’
 ‘Oh, that’s a thin dead body which waits the eternal
 term.’

‘Turn again, O my sweetest,—turn again, false and fleetest :
 This beaten way thou beatest, I fear is hell’s own track.’
 ‘Nay, too steep for hill mounting; nay, too late for cost
 counting :
 This downhill path is easy, but there’s no turning back.’

AFTER DEATH.

THE curtains were half drawn, the floor was swept
 And strewn with rushes, rosemary and may
 Lay thick upon the bed on which I lay,
 Where through the lattice ivy-shadows crept.
 He leaned above me, thinking that I slept
 And could not hear him; but I heard him say :
 ‘Poor child, poor child :’ and as he turned away

Came a deep silence, and I knew he wept.
He did not touch the shroud, or raise the fold
That hid my face, or take my hand in his,
Or ruffle the smooth pillows for my head :
He did not love me living ; but once dead
He pitied me ; and very sweet it is
To know he still is warm though I am cold.

SONG.

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me ;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress-tree :
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dew-drops wet ;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain ;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain :
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

CONSIDER.

CONSIDER
The lilies of the field whose bloom is brief : —
We are as they ;
Like them we fade away,
As doth a leaf.

Consider
 The sparrows of the air of small account :
 Our God doth view
 Whether they fall or mount, —
 He guards us too.

Consider
 The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,
 Yet are most fair : —
 What profits all this care
 And all this coil ?

Consider
 The birds that have no barn nor harvest-weeks ;
 God gives them food : —
 Much more our Father seeks
 To do us good.

UP-HILL.

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way ?
 Yes, to the very end.
 Will the day's journey take the whole long day ?
 From morn to night, my friend.
 But is there for the night a resting-place ?
 A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
 May not the darkness hide it from my face ?
 You can not miss that inn.
 Shall I meet other wayfarers at night ?
 Those who have gone before.
 Then must I knock, or call when just in sight ?
 They will not keep you standing at the door.
 Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak ?
 Of labor you shall find the sum.
 Will there be beds for me and all who seek ?
 Yea, beds for all who come.

ERNEST MYERS.

RHODES.

BEYOND the ages far away,
When yet the fateful Earth was young,
And mid her seas unfurrowed lay
Her lands uncitied and unsung,
The Gods in council round their King
Were met for her apportioning.

Then shook the Sire the golden urn
Wherefrom the lots leapt forth to view,
And God by God took up in turn
The symbol of his kingdom due ;
Till each had linked some heavenly name
To human hope and human fame.

When lo, a footstep on the floor,
A radiance in the radiant air ;
A God august, forgot before,
Too late arrived, was lastly there —
The Sun-god from his fiery car
Unyoked beneath the evening star.

Then said the Sire : ‘ For thee no lot,
O Sun, of all the lots is drawn,
For thy bright chariot, well I wot,
Hath held thee since the broadening dawn.
But come, for all the gods are fain
For thy fair sake to cast again.’

‘Nay now, for me is little need
 New lots to cast’ (so spake the Sun);
 ‘One isle assign me for the meed
 Of that diurnal course I run :
 Behold beneath the glimmering sea
 A land unclaimed, the land for me.’

Therewith he shot an arrowy ray
 Down through the blue *Ægean* deep ;
 Thrilled by that magic dart of day,
 The hidden isle shook off her sleep.
 She moved, she rose, and with the morn
 She touched the air, and Rhodes was born.

Then all about that starry sea
 There ran a gratulating stir,
 Her fellows for all time to be
 In choral congress greeting her,
 With air-borne song and flashing smiles,
 A sisterhood of glorious isles.

And still as from his car on high
 Her Lord his daily splendor sent,
 She joyed to know his gladdening eye
 On her, his best-beloved, was bent :
 And ever in that fostering gaze
 Grew up the stature of her praise.

What early wondrous might was hers,
 The craftsmanship of cunning hands,
 Of that wise art the harbingers
 Whose fame is uttered through all lands
 Then Rhodians by the Sun-god’s side
 Besought *Athene* to abide.

She came, she loved the Rosy Isle,
 And Lindos reared her eastward fane

To Rhodian chiefs she brought the while
New thoughts, new valiance in her train,
New hope to bind about their brows
The olive of her father's house.

Then won Diagoras that prize
Yet fairer than his silvery crown,
That voice whereby in godlike wise
His name through time goes deathless down.
In graven gold her walls along
Flamed forth the proud Pindaric song.

She too her own Athenians stirred
To that fair deed of chivalry,
That high imperishable word
That set the Rhodian Dorieus free,
And linked in unison divine
Her Lindian to her Attic shrine.

Bright hours, too brief! The shadowing hand
Half barbarous of a giant form
Even the strong Sun-god's loyal land
Must wrap in mist of sombre storm,
When Hellas bowed, her birthright gone,
Beneath the might of Macedon.

Yet even then not lightly bound
Was Rhodes of any vanquisher ;
With all his engines thundering round
The City-stormer stormed not her.
In vain : anon the Roman doom
Had sealed her spirit in the tomb.

Long ages slept she. Then a dream
Once more across her slumber shone,
Cleaving the dark, a quickening gleam
All-glorious as in days foregone ;

A new God's presence nobler far
Than any Lord of sun or star.

He showed her him whose chosen head
Had leaned upon his holy breast;
'For John my well-beloved,' he said,
'Stand forth, a champion of the West,
Sealed with my name, and his in mine,
Our vanguard in the war divine.'

She rose, she stemmed the Moslem flood
That roared and ravined for her life,
Till drop by drop the knightly blood
Was drained in that stupendous strife;
Then, sole amid the o'erwhelming sea,
Sank in heroic agony.

Twice born, twice slain ! all this is o'er
Three hundred years ; yet may there be
(So strong a life is in thy core),
O Rhodes, another birth for thee.
Look up, behold this banner new,
The white cross on the field of blue.

Through all the Isles the broadening light
Creeps on its sure but lingering way,
And half are in the fading night
And half are in the dawning day :
Thou too, O Rhodes, shalt make thee one
Once more with freedom and the Sun.

FROM 'THE JUDGMENT OF PROMETHEUS.'²⁰

AGAIN the Thunderer spake : 'Titan, thy task
Is ended, but not ended be thy stay
Among thy peers, this company of Gods.
Here is thy place prepared, here dwell content,

Our counsellor at need, our new-won friend.
Rest here at ease, and learn the unfolded tale
By all these ages wrought in Heaven and Earth,
And changeful tribes of men, thy chosen care,
Once loved by thee alone ; but now, be sure,
There is no God that hath not linked his name,
Perchance his race, to human hope and fear.
Stay then, for change by change is recompensed,
And new things now wax old, and old are new.'

He spake, and all the approving throng divine
With acclamation free applauded loud,
Bidding the Titan welcome and all hail ;
Henceforth, they cried, a counsellor of Heaven,
Interpreter of Fate, and friend of Man.
But when their greeting ceased, and sought reply,
He raised his eyes, and with slow-moving gaze
Looked round on that celestial company.

Then with deep voice and mild he answering said :

'Deem not, O Gods, I lightly prize your call.
Thought of inveterate wrong, no longer now
By hourly instant anguish riveted,
Hath fallen from my soul, and left her free
To sweep on ample circles of her wing
Amid dim visions, slowly growing clear,
Of rolling age on age, her proper realm,
Her proper lore ; yet all I gladly learn :
Either of this new kindlier life of Heaven,
Or of that once-scorned world of suffering men,
Whereto your world is linked for ever now,
Right gladly would I hear, yet not as one
Quite shut from knowledge all these exiled years.
Think ye my Mother dear, deep-murmuring Earth,
Could find no means of message, when I lay
On the bare rock between her breast and Heaven? —
That starry Heaven that made me know my life
Not unbefriended of celestial Powers,

Though other than Olympian ; year by year,
 Through height ineffable of frozen air,
 Stooped the keen stars, and graved upon my soul,
 In fateful characters of golden fire,
 Deep and more deep, their slow-unfolding lore.
 And more of what they told I too must tell,
 Sometime, not now : enough of things to be
 Hath been to-day revealed. But now, O Gods,
 Farewell ; I may not tarry for your voice,
 Your friendly voice ; but other voices call,
 Inaudible to you, but to this heart
 Admonitory, o'er-mastering, deeply dear.
 Yea, my racked being yearns for great repose,
 Deep sleep and sweet, almost the sleep of death :
 And after that, long time my life must pause
 In meditative musing, now no more
 Pierced by abrupt assault of arrowy pain.
 Not here my place of rest ; far hence I seek,
 Beyond or world of Gods or world of men,
 The Tower of ancient Kronos, where he dwells
 Amid the Blessèd Isles, his final home,
 The habitation of a holy calm.
 There evermore the West-winds dewy-winged,
 Borne o'er the Ocean-river, lightly breathe ;
 And over all that sweet and solemn realm
 Broods a mild golden light of mellow beam,
 Less bright by far than this celestial splendor,
 A low warm light, as of eternal eve.
 And there are gathered, or shall gather soon,
 All my dear kindred, offspring of the Earth,
 The brotherhood Titanic, finding there
 Harbor desired, and after sore exile
 Rejoining well content their ancient King.
 Nor these alone ; for to that saving shore
 A race far other surely shall be called,
 Of seed far humbler sprung, but by decree

Of dooms august, that doom both God and Man,
Raised to high meed, the spirits of just men
Made here companions of immortal Gods;
Themselves perchance — grudge not, O seed of Heaven! —
Destined, despite their clay, to conquer death.
There for long years, how long I know not yet,
My lot is fixed with that dear folk to dwell;
But not for ever; sometime yet to be
(Thus far I know and tell) I come again,
To counsel, and to do, and endure.
But whether to this glorious hall of Heaven,
Or whether unto Man's long-suffering brood,
I know not — nay nor even surely know
If this my shape wherein I stand to-day
Be changed at my new coming: on such wise
Wears my great Mother many a form and name,
Yet holds through all her one identity.
Thus may I too. Or if the time shall come
When all the storèd counsel of my soul
Is spent, and all mine oracles outworn,
There shall not fail a prophet in my place,
Some hand to bear the torch, new wisdom bringing
Wiser than Promethéan; yet that too
Taught him not only by the all-teacher Time,
But by long toil and travail, hate and love,
Design, and disappointment, and defeat,
And by rapt converse held with Earth, and Stars,
And with deep hidden well-springs of the world.
But now to my much yearned for rest afar
I must be gone. Wherefore, for that long way,
I pray ye, deathless Presences of Heaven,
Suffer one moment in your shining halls
The appointed convoy that shall bear me hence.
They wait without, and now are near at hand.
My strength is spent in speaking: Gods, farewell!'
He ceased, but with his word they saw descend

Two Shapes benign that with wide-hovering wing,
Noiseless as birds' that through the brooding night
Flit all unheard, and of like feathery form,
Close to the Titan's side came floating down.
Well known the one, and welcome even in Heaven,
For even in Heaven who shall not welcome Sleep?
But round his brother twin a halo hung,
Well-nigh invisible, a filmy veil,
And his calm lips were paler : through the Gods
A brief scare-heeded shudder lightly ran
At that mild Presence, for they looked on Death.
Not for dominion came he there that day,
But helpmeet of his brother, bound with him
To welcome succor of the weary God.
So to his side those Forms fraternal drew.
His faint eyes half had closed, his failing head
Sank on the breast of Sleep : together both
Raised him with reverend touch, and spread their plumes
Inaudibly. One beat of those wide wings,
Fraught with their sacred burden, bare them forth ;
And in a moment, lo, the heavenly hall
Held them no more, but far they fled on
Down through the glimmering deep of empty air.

HERMAN CHARLES MERIVALE.

OLD AND NEW ROME.

WHAT came we forth to see? a fair or race?
Some hero fêted by an eager crowd?
Or would we do some favored princeling grace,
That thus we herd so close, and talk so loud?

Pushing and struggling, fighting, crushing, shouting,
What are these motley gazers here to seek,
Like merry-makers on a summer outing?
'T is but the services of Holy Week.

The Eternal City swarms with eager strangers
From every quarter of the busy earth;
Who fill the temples like the money-changers,
And say some prayers — for what they may be worth.

A never-ending tide of restless motion,
They come to burn, in fashion rather odd,
The incense of their polyglot devotion,
Before the altars of the Latin God.

As flock the Londoners to Epsom Races,
Or form a 'queue' to see the newest play,
So do the pilgrim-tourists fight for places
Before the chapels in their zeal to pray.

From holy place to holy place they flit,
To 'do' as many churches as they can;
And humbly kneeling, for the fun of it,
They climb the ladder of the Lateran.

Here some fair maid, her Heavenward journey steering,
Where by Swiss bayonets the way is barred,
Nor Law, nor Pope, nor Antonelli fearing —
Breaks through the lines of the astonished guard.

In customary suit of solemn black,
With string of beads and veil à l'*Espagnole*,
She means to 'see it' all; to keep her back
Would be to peril her immortal soul.

There a slim youth, while all but he are kneeling
Through levelled opera-glass looks down on them,
When round the Sistine's pictured roof is pealing
Our buried Lord's majestic Requiem.

For him each storied wonder of the globe is
'The sort of thing a fellow ought to see ;'
And so he patronized *Ora pro nobis*,
And wanted to encore the *Tenebræ*.

Stranger ! what though these sounds and sights be grandest
Of all that on Earth's surface can be found?
Remember that the place whereon thou standest,
Be thy creed what it may, is holy ground.

Yet I have gaped and worshipped with the rest —
I, too, beneath St. Peter's lofty dome
Have seen, in all their richest colors dressed,
The golden glories of historic Rome ;

Have heard the Pontiff's ringing voice bestow,
'Mid cheering multitudes and flags unfurled,
Borne by the cannon of St. Angelo,
His blessing on the 'City and the World ;'

Have seen — and thrilled with wonder as I gazed —
Ablaze with living lines of golden light,
Like some fire-throne to the Eternal raised,
The great Basilica burn through the night ;

Have heard the trumpet-notes of Easter Day,
Their silver echoes circling all around,
In strange unearthly music float away,
Stones on the lake translated into sound ; —

Yet would I wander from the crowd apart,
While heads were bowed and tuneful voices sang,
And through the deep recesses of my heart
A still small voice in solemn warning rang.

‘ Oh vanity of vanities ! ye seem,
Ye pomps and panoplies of mortal state,
To make this text the matter of your theme,
That God is little, and that Man is great.

‘ Is this parade of the world’s wealth and splendor
The lesson of the simple gospel-word ?
Is this the sacrifice of self-surrender
Taught by the lowly followers of the Lord ?

‘ Do we, who broider thus the garment’s hem,
Think of the swaddling-clothes the child had on ?
Grace we the casket, to neglect the gem ?
Forget we quite the manger for the throne ? ’

.

While thus in moralizing mood I pondered,
I turned me from the hum of men alone ;
And, as my vagrant fancy led me, wandered
Amid the maze of monumental stone.

The crowd their favorite lions now forswore,
Left galleries and ruins in the lurch ;
The cicerone’s glory was no more,
For all the world was gathered in the church.

So at my will I strayed from place to place,
From classic shrines to modern studios —

Now musing spellbound, where Our Lady's face
In nameless godhead from the canvas glows.

Now, from the still Campagna's desolate rise,
I saw the hills with jealous clasp enfold
The lingering sunlight, while the seaward skies
Paled slowly round the melting disc of gold ;

Now gazed, ere yet on dome and tower had died
The glory of the Roman afterglow,
Over the map-like city lying wide,
Half-dreaming, from the Monte Mario.

Traveller, do thou the like ; and wouldst thou learn
How Rome her faithful votaries enthralls
With all the memories that breathe and burn
Within the magic circle of her walls,

Leave pomp of man and track of guide-led tourist,
And drink of history at the fountain-head ;
For living minds and living things are poorest
In that vast mausoleum of the dead.

There, where the stately Barberini pile
Like some new Nimrod's fabric heav'nward climbs,
Enduring monument of Christian guile,
By outrage wrested from the Pagan times ;

Where lulled and drowsy with the distant hum,
The sentinel keeps watch upon the town,
And from the heights of old Janiculum
On Father Tiber's yellow face looks down ;

Where in their southern grace the moonbeams play
On Caracalla's tessellated floors,
And rescue from the garish light of day
The Colosseum's ghostly corridors ;

Where Raphael and all his great compeers
Art's form divine in giant-mould have cast,
The very air is heavy with the years,
The very stones are vocal of the past.

Still, as we saunter down the crowded street,
On our own thoughts intent, and plans, and pleasures,
For miles and miles, beneath our idle feet,
Rome buries from the day yet unknown treasures.

The whole world's alphabet, in every line
Some stirring page of history she recalls;
Her Alpha is the Prison Mamertine,
Her Omega, St. Paul's Without the Walls.

Above, beneath, around, she weaves her spells,
And ruder hands unweave them all in vain:
Who once within her fascination dwells,
Leaves her with but one thought — to come again.

So cast thine obol into Trevi's fountain —
Drink of its waters — and, returning home,
Pray that by land or sea, by lake or mountain,
'All roads alike may lead at last to Rome.'

THE
WRITERS OF VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ.

THE
WRITERS OF VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

THE KING AND THE BEGGAR MAID.

A NEW READING.

THE young King stands by his palace-gate,
O what a joy is the youth of a King !
Tired a little of splendor and state —
Hark in the valley the sweet birds sing.

Like a lion's mane his yellow hair,
His eye as keen as a hawk's on the wing,
The ladies gaze and tremble there —
Ah, is it not sweet, the love of a King?

He sees the towers of his city below,
O shining river ! O ships that swing !
Through wide white streets his people flow,
Hark, the bells of the Minster ring !

The beggar comes by with a nut-brown skin,
Ah, deep in the heart lies misery's sting !
Her eye has a blue to the sky akin,
Tirra-lirra, he hears her sing.

Forward he strides as the girl he sees,
O how wild is the will of a King !

The ladies titter under the trees ;
Still the bells of the Minster ring.

What the young King whispers none has heard,
Hey for the heath where the wild birds sing !
But the echo is caught of the Beggar's word :
'I love my love, and he is not a King.'

4

THE IVORY GATE.

*Sunt geminae Somni portae ; quarum altera fertur
Cornea, qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris :
Altera, candenti perfecta nitens elephanto ;
Sed falsa ad cælum mittunt insomnia Manes.*

VIRGIL.

WHEN, loved by poet and painter
The sunrise fills the sky,
When night's gold urns grow fainter,
And in depths of amber die —
When the moon-breeze stirs the curtain,
Bearing an odorous freight —
Then visions strange, uncertain,
Pour thick through the Ivory Gate.

Then the oars of Ithaca dip so
Silently into the sea,
That they wake not sad Calypso —
And the Hero wanders free :
He breasts the ocean-furrows,
At war with the words of Fate —
And the blue tide's low susurrus
Comes up to the Ivory Gate.

Or, clad in the hide of leopard,
'Mid Ida's freshest dews,
Paris, the Teucrian shepherd,
His sweet CEnone woos :

On the thought of her coming bridal
 Unuttered joy doth wait —
 While the tune of the false one's idyl
 Rings soft through the Ivory Gate.

Or down from green Helvellyn
 The roar of streams I hear,
 And the lazy sail is swelling
 To the winds of Windermere :
 That girl with the rustic bodice
 'Mid the ferry's laughing freight
 Is as fair as any goddess
 Who sweeps through the Ivory Gate.

Ah, the vision of dawn is leisure —
 But the truth of day is toil :
 And we pass from dreams of pleasure
 To the world's unstayed turmoil,
 Perchance, beyond the river
 Which guards the realms of Fate,
 Our spirits may dwell for ever
 'Mong dreams of the Ivory Gate.

APRIL FOOLS.

COMES April, her white fingers wet with flowers,
 And we might well enjoy her sunny showers,
 If the malignant Fate which o'er us rules
 Did not bring April Fools.

Fools who will whisper, you and I together
 Ought not to wander in the sweet spring weather,
 For I'm a boy and you're a girl, and so
 'Tis very wrong, you know.

A LITTLE LECTURE.

SIR still, child, if you know the way,
Cross your white arms upon your breast;
Let the dark glory of your hair
From bands escape.
'Tis weary always to be gay;
And sweet is silence, sweet is rest:
We drink the juices of despair
From Life's crushed grape.

Why should I lecture? You are young,
And tameless as a dragon-fly
And beautiful to look upon,
And sweet to touch.
Nothing you know of nerves unstrung,
Nor can believe that you will die,
And go where other girls have gone.
I ask too much.

Pshaw! Flutter like a pretty bird,
Outrun the wind, outlaugh the brooks,
Flout the frail ferns with flying feet,
Outblush the rose;
Let your young petulant voice be heard
Joyous through all the forest-nooks.
But have you got a soul, my sweet?
Who knows? Who knows?

A GAME OF CHESS.

TERRACE and lawns are white with frost,
Whose fretwork flowers upon the panes —
A mocking dream of summer, lost
'Mid winter's icy chains.

White-hot, indoors, the great logs gleam,
 Veiled by a flickering flame of blue :
 I see my love as in a dream —
 Her eyes are azure, too.

She puts her hair behind her ears
 (Each little ear so like a shell),
 Touches her ivory Queen, and fears
 She is not playing well.

For me, I think of nothing less :
 I think how those pure pearls become her —
 And which is sweetest, winter chess
 Or garden strolls in summer.

O linger, frost, upon the pane !
 O faint blue flame, still softly rise !
 O, dear one, thus with me remain,
 That I may watch thine eyes !

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A LITTLE shadow makes the sunrise sad,
 A little trouble checks the race of joy,
 A little agony may drive men mad,
 A little madness may the soul destroy :
 Such is the world's annoy.

Ay, and the rose is but a little flower
 Which the red Queen of all the garden is :
 And Love, which lasteth but a little hour,
 A moment's rapture and a moment's kiss,
 Is what no man would miss.

TO F. C.

20th FEBRUARY, 1875.

FAST falls the snow, O lady mine,
Sprinkling the lawn with crystals fine,
But by the gods we won't repine
 While we 're together,
We 'll chat and rhyme and kiss and dine,
 Defying weather.

So stir the fire and pour the wine,
And let those sea-green eyes divine
Pour their love-madness into mine :
 I don't care whether
'T is snow or sun or rain or shine
 If we're together.

FREDERICK LOCKER-LAMPSON.

TO MY GRANDMOTHER.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE BY MR. ROMNEY.

*Under the elm a rustic seat
Was merriest Susan's pet retreat
To merry make.*

THIS relative of mine,
Was she seventy-and-nine
 When she died?
By the canvas may be seen
How she looked at seventeen,
 As a bride.

Beneath a summer tree,
Her maiden reverie
 Has a charm;
Her ringlets are in taste;
What an arm! — what a waist
 For an arm!

With her bridal-wreath, bouquet,
Lace farthingale, and gay
 Falbala, —
Were Romney's limning true,
What a lucky dog were you,
 Grandpapa!

Her lips are sweet as love ;
They are parting ! Do they move ?
Are they dumb ?
Her eyes are blue, and beam
Beseechingly, and seem
To say, ' Come ! '

What funny fancy slips
From atween these cherry lips ?
Whisper me,
Sweet sorceress in paint,
What canon says I may n't
Marry thee ?

That good-for-nothing Time
Has a confidence sublime !
When I first
Saw this lady, in my youth,
Her winters had, forsooth,
Done their worst.

Her locks, as white as snow,
Once shamed the swarthy crow ;
By-and-by
That fowl's avenging sprite
Set his cruel foot for spite
Near her eye.

Her rounded form was lean,
And her silk was bombazine :
Well I wot
With her needles would she sit,
And for hours would she knit, —
Would she not ?

Ah, perishable clay ;
Her charms had dropped away
One by one :

But if she heaved a sigh
 With a burthen, it was, Thy
 Will be done.

In travail, as in tears,
 With the fardel of her years
 Overprest,
 In mercy she was borne
 Where the weary and the worn
 Are at rest.

O, if you now are there,
 And sweet as once you were,
 Grandmamma,
 This nether world agrees
 'T will all the better please
 Grandpapa.

THE PILGRIMS OF PALL MALL.

*Her eyes and her hair
 Are superb ;
 She stands in despair
 On the kerb.
 Quick, stranger, advance
 To her aid : —
 She's across, with a glance
 You're repaid.
 She's fair, and you're tall,
 fal-lal-la !
 What will come of it all ?
 CHI LO SA.*

CUPID ON THE CROSSING.

My little friend, so small, so neat,
 Whom years ago I used to meet
 In Pall Mall daily,
 How cheerily you tript away
 To work, it might have been to play,
 You tript so gayly.

And Time trips too ! This moral means
You then were midway in the teens
 That I was crowning ;
We never spoke, but when I smiled
At morn or eve, I know, dear child,
 You were not frowning.

Each morning that we met, I think
One sentiment us two did link,
 Not joy nor sorrow ;
And then at eve, experience-taught,
Our hearts were lighter for the thought, —
 We meet to-morrow !

And you were poor, so poor ! and why ?
How kind to come, it was for my
 Especial grace meant !
Had you a chamber near the stars, —
A bird, — some treasured plants in jars,
 About your casement ?

Often I wander up and down,
When morning bathes the silent town
 In dewy glory.
Perhaps, unwitting, I have heard
Your thrilling-toned canary-bird
 From that third story.

I 've seen some change since last we met —
A patient little seamstress yet,
 On small wage striving,
Have you a Lilliputian Spouse ?
And do you dwell in some doll's house ? —
 Is baby thriving ?

My heart grows chill — can soul like thine
Weary of this dear World of mine,
 Have loosed its fetter,

To find a world, whose promised bliss
Is better than the best of this ? —
And is it better ?

Sometimes to Pall Mall I repair,
And see the damsels passing there ;
But if I try to —
To get one glance, they look discreet,
As though they 'd some one else to meet ; —
As have not *I* too ?

Yet still I often think upon
Our many meetings, come and gone,
July — December !
Now let us make a tryst, and when,
Dear little soul, we meet again,
In some serener sphere, why then
Thy Friend remember.

VANITY FAIR.

VANITAS vanitatum has rung in the ears
Of gentle and simple for thousands of years ;
The wail still is heard, yet its notes never scare
Either simple or gentle from Vanity Fair.

I often hear people abusing it, yet
There the young go to learn and the old to forget ;
The mirth may be feigning, the sheen may be glare,
But the gingerbread's gilded in Vanity Fair.

Old Dives there rolls in his chariot, but mind
Atra Cura is up with the lackeys behind ;
Joan trudges with Jack, — are the Sweet-hearts aware
Of the trouble that waits them in Vanity Fair ?

We saw them all go, and we something may learn
Of the harvest they reap when we see them return.
The tree was enticing, its branches are bare, —
Heigho for the promise of Vanity Fair.

That stupid old Dives, once honest enough,
His honesty sold for star, ribbon, and stuff;
And Joan's pretty face has been clouded with care
Since Jack bought her ribbons at Vanity Fair.

Contemptible Dives! too credulous Joan!
Yet we all have a Vanity Fair of our own;
My son, you have yours, but you need not despair —
I own I've a weakness for Vanity Fair.

Philosophy halts — wise counsels are vain,
We go, we repent, we return there again;
To-night you will certainly meet with us there —
So come and be merry in Vanity Fair.

GERTRUDE'S NECKLACE.

As Gerty skipt from babe to girl,
Her necklace lengthened, pearl by pearl;
Year after year it grew, and grew,
For every birthday gave her two.
Her neck is lovely, soft and fair,
And now her necklace glimmers there.

So cradled, let it sink and rise,
And all her graces emblemize.
Perchance this pearl, without a speck,
Once was as warm on Sappho's neck; —
Where are the happy, twilight pearls
That braided Beatrice's curls?

Is Gerty loved? — Is Gerty loth?
Or, if she's either, is she both?

She 's fancy free, but sweeter far
 Than many plighted maidens are :
 Will Gerty smile us all away,
 And still be Gerty? Who can say?

But let her wear her precious toy,
 And I'll rejoice to see her joy :
 Her bauble 's only one degree
 Less frail, less fugitive than we ;
 For time, ere long, will snap the skein,
 And scatter all the pearls again.

THE OLD CRADLE.

AND this was your Cradle? Why surely, my Jenny,
 Such slender dimensions go clearly to show
 You were an exceedingly small picaninny
 Some nineteen or twenty short summers ago.

Your baby-days flowed in a much-troubled channel ;
 I see you as then in your impotent strife,
 A tight little bundle of wailing and flannel,
 Perplexed with that newly-found fardel called Life.

To hint at an infantine frailty 's a scandal ;
 Let bygones be bygones, and somebody knows
 It was bliss such a Baby to dance and to dandle, —
 Your cheeks were so velvet, so rosy your toes.

Ay, here is your cradle ; and Hope, a bright spirit,
 With Love now is watching beside it, I know.
 They guard the wee nest it was yours to inherit
 Some nineteen or twenty short summers ago.

It is Hope gilds the future, Love welcomes it smiling ;
 Thus wags the old world, therefore stay not to ask,

My future bids fair, is my future beguiling?
 If masked, still it pleases — then raise not the mask.

Is Life a poor coil some would gladly be doffing?
 He is riding post-haste who their wrongs will adjust;
 For at most 't is a footstep from cradle to coffin —
 From a spoonful of pap to a mouthful of dust.

Then smile as your future is smiling, my Jenny;
 I see you, except for those infantine woes,
 Little changed since you were but a small picaninny —
 Your cheeks were so dimpled, so rosy your toes!

Ay, here is your cradle, much, much to my liking,
 Though nineteen or twenty long winters have sped.
 But hark! as I'm talking there's six o'clock striking, —
 It is time JENNY'S BABY should be in its bed.

A GARDEN IDYLL.

*There are plenty of roses (the patriarch speaks)
 But alas not for me, on your lips and your cheeks;
 Sweet Maiden, rose laden — enough and to spare —
 Spare, O spare me the rose that you wear in your hair.*

WE have loitered and laughed in the flowery croft,
 We have met under wintry skies;
 Her voice is the dearest voice, and soft
 Is the light in her wistful eyes;
 It is sweet in the silent woods, among
 Gay crowds, or in any place
 To hear her voice, to gaze on her young
 Confiding face.

For ever may roses divinely blow,
 And wine-dark pansies charm

By the prim box path where I felt the glow
Of her dimpled, trusting arm,
And the sweep of her silk as she turned and smiled
A smile as fair as her pearls;
The breeze was in love with the darling child,
As it moved her curls.

She showed me her ferns and woodbine sprays,
Foxglove and jasmine stars,
A mist of blue in the beds, a blaze
Of red in the celadon jars:
And velvety bees in convolvulus bells,
And roses of bountiful June —
Oh, who would think the summer spells
Could die so soon!

For a glad song came from the milking shed,
On a wind of that summer south,
And the green was golden above her head,
And a sunbeam kissed her mouth;
Sweet were the lips where that sunbeam dwelt —
And the wings of Time were fleet
As I gazed; and neither spoke, for we felt
Life was so sweet!

And the odorous limes were dim above
As we leant on a drooping bough;
And the darkling air was a breath of love,
And a witching thrush sang Now!
For the sun dropt low, and the twilight grew
As we listened, and sighed, and leant —
That day was the sweetest day — and we knew
What the sweetest meant.

TO LINA OSWALD,

AGED FIVE YEARS.

*When vapid poets vex thee sore,
Thy Mentor's old, and would remind thee,
That if thy griefs are all before,
Thy pleasures are not all behind thee.*

I TUMBLE out of bed betimes
To make my love these toddling rhymes ;
And meet the hour, and meet the place
To bless her blithe good-morning face.
I send her all this heart can store ;
I seem to see her as before,
An angel-child, divinely fair,
With meek blue eyes, and golden hair,
Curls tipt with changing light, that shed
A little glory round her head.

Has poet ever sung or seen a
Sweeter, wiser child than Lina ?
Blue are her sash and snood, and blue 's
The hue of her bewitching shoes ;
But, saving these, she 's virgin dight,
A happy creature clad in white.

Again she stands beneath the boughs,
Reproves the pup, and feeds the cows ;
Unvexed by rule, unscared by ill,
She wanders at her own sweet will ;
For what grave fiat could confine
My little chartered libertine,
Yet free from feeling or from seeing
The burthen of her moral being ?

But change must come, and forms and dyes
Will change before her changing eyes ;

She 'll learn to blush, and hope, and fear —
And where shall I be then, my dear?

Little gossip, set apart
But one small corner of thy heart;
Still there is one not quite employed,
So let me find and fill that void;
Run then, and jump, and laugh, and play,
But love me though I 'm far away.

GERTRUDE'S GLOVE.

*Elle avait au bout de ses manches
Une paire de mains si blanches!*

SLIPS of a kid-skin deftly sewn,
A scent as through her garden blown,
The tender hue that clothes her dove,
All these, and this is Gerty's glove.

A glove but lately dofft, for look —
It keeps the happy shape it took
Warm from her touch! What gave the glow?
And where 's the mould that shaped it so?

It clasped the hand, so pure, so sleek,
Where Gerty rests a pensive cheek,
The hand that when the light wind stirs,
Reproves those laughing locks of hers.

You fingers four, you little thumb!
Were I but you, in days to come
I 'd clasp, and kiss, — and keep her — go!
And tell her that I told you so.

DU RYS DE MADAME D'ALLEBRET.

How fair those locks which now the light wind stirs !
What eyes she has, and what a perfect arm !
And yet methinks that little Laugh of hers —
That little Laugh is still her crowning charm.
Where'er she passes, country-side or town,
The streets make festa, and the fields rejoice.
Should sorrow come, as 't will, to cast me down,
Or Death, as come he must, to hush my voice,
Her Laugh would wake me, just as now it thrills me —
That little giddy Laugh wherewith she kills me.

LOVE, TIME, AND DEATH.

AH me, dread friends of mine — Love, Time, and Death !
Sweet Love who came to me on sheeny wing,
And gave her to my arms — her lips, her breath,
And all her golden ringlets clustering:
And Time who gathers in the flying years
He gave me all, but where is all he gave ?
He took my Love and left me barren tears, —
Weary and lone I follow to the grave.
There Death will end this vision half divine, —
Wan Death, who waits in shadow evermore,
And silent, ere he give the sudden sign ;
O, gently lead me thro' thy narrow door,
Thou gentle Death, thou trustiest friend of mine,
— Ah me, for Love — *will* Death my Love restore ?

AN ÉPITAPH.

HER worth, her wit, her loving smile
Were with me but a little while ;
She came, she went ; yet though that Voice

Is hushed that made the heart rejoice,
 And though the grave is dark and chill,
 Her memory is fragrant still, —
 She stands on the eternal hill.

Here pause, kind soul, whoe'er you be,
 And weep for her, and pray for me.

HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON.

A SONG OF ANGIOLA IN HEAVEN.

FLOWERS, — that have died upon my Sweet
Lulled by the rhythmic dancing beat
Of her young bosom under you, —
Now will I show you such a thing
As never, through thick buds of spring,
Betwixt the daylight and the dew,
The Bird whose being no man knows —
The voice that waketh all night through,
Tells to the Rose.

For lo, — a garden-place I found,
Well filled of leaves, and stilled of sound,
Well flowered, with red fruit marvellous;
And 'twixt the shining trunks would flit
Tall knights and silken maids, or sit
With faces bent and amorous; —
There, in the heart thereof, and crowned
With woodbine and amaracus,
My Love I found.

Alone she walked, — ah, well I wis,
My heart leapt up for joy of this! —
Then when I called to her her name, —
The name, that like a pleasant thing
Men's lips remember, murmuring,
At once across the sward she came, —

Full fain she seemed, my own dear maid,
 And asked ever as she came,
 'Where hast thou stayed?'

'Where hast thou stayed?' — she asked as though
 The long years were an hour ago;
 But I spake not, nor answerèd,
 For, looking in her eyes, I saw
 A light not lit of mortal law;
 And in her clear cheek's changeless red,
 And sweet, unshaken speaking found
 That in this place the Hours were dead,
 And Time was bound.

'This is well done,' she said, — 'in thee,
 O Love, that thou art come to me,
 To this green garden glorious;
 Now truly shall our life be sped
 In joyance and all goodlihed,
 For here all things are fair to us,
 And none with burden is oppressed,
 And none is poor or piteous, —
 For here is Rest.

'No formless Future blurs the sky;
 Men mourn not here, with dull dead eye,
 By shrouded shapes of Yesterday;
 Betwixt the Coming and the Past
 The flawless life hangs fixen fast
 In one unwearying To-Day,
 That darkens not; for Sin is shriven,
 Death from the doors is thrust away,
 And here is Heaven.'

At 'Heaven' she ceased; — and lifted up
 Her fair head like a flower-cup,
 With rounded mouth, and eyes aglow;

Then set I lips to hers, and felt, —
 Ah, God, — the hard pain fade and melt,
 And past things change to painted show;
 The song of quiring birds outbroke;
 The lit leaves laughed, — sky shook, and lo,
 I swooned, — and woke.

And now, O Flowers,
 — Ye that indeed are dead, —
 Now for all waiting hours,
 Well am I comforted;
 For of a surety, now, I see,
 That, without dim distress
 Of tears, or weariness,
 My Lady, verily, awaiteth me;
 So that until with Her I be,
 For my dear Lady's sake
 I am right fain to make
 Out from my pain a pillow, and to take
 Grief for a golden garment unto me;
 Knowing that I, at last, shall stand
 In that green garden-land,
 And, in the holding of my dear Love's hand
 Forget the grieving and the misery.

THE OLD SEDAN CHAIR.

*'What's not destroyed by Time's devouring hand?
 Where's Troy — and where's the May-pole in the Strand?'*
 BRAMSTON'S 'ART OF POLITICS.'

It stands in the stable-yard, under the eaves,
 Propped up by a broom-stick and covered with leaves.
 It once was the pride of the gay and the fair,
 But now 't is a ruin, that old Sedan chair!

It is battered and tattered, — it little avails
That once it was lacquered, and glistened with nails,
For its leather is cracked into lozenge and square, —
Like a canvas by Wilkie, — that old Sedan chair !

See, — here came the bearing-straps ; here were the holes
For the poles of the bearers — when once there were poles ;
It was cushioned with silk, it was wadded with hair, —
As the birds have discovered, — that old Sedan chair !

Where's Troy ? says the poet ! Look, — under the seat,
Is a nest with four eggs, — 't is the favored retreat
Of the Muscovy hen, who has hatched, I dare swear,
Quite an army of chicks in that old Sedan chair !

And yet — can't you fancy a face in the frame
Of the window, — some high-headed damsel or dame,
Be-patched and be-powdered, just set by the stair,
While they raise up the lid of that old Sedan chair ?

Can't you fancy Sir Plume, as beside her he stands,
With his ruffles a-droop on his delicate hands,
With his cinnamon coat, with his laced solitaire,
As he lifts her out light from that old Sedan chair ?

Then it swings away slowly. Ah, many a league
It has trotted 'twixt sturdy-legged Terence and Teague ;
Stout fellows, — but prone, on a question of fare,
To brandish the poles of that old Sedan chair !

It has waited by portals where Garrick has played ;
It has waited by Heidegger's Grand Masquerade ;
For my Lady Codille, for my Lady Bellair,
It has waited — and waited, that old Sedan chair !

Oh, the scandals it knows ! Oh, the tales it could tell
Of Drum and Ridotto, of Rake and of Belle, —
Of Cock-fight and Levee, and (scarcely more rare !)
Of Fête-days at Tyburn, that old Sedan chair !

Heu ! quantum mutata, I say as I go.
 It deserves better fate than a stable-yard, though !
 We must furbish it up, and despatch it, — ‘With Care,’ —
 To a Fine-Art Museum — that old Sedan chair !

MOLLY TREFUSIS.

*‘Now the Graces are four and the Venuses two,
 And ten is the number of Muses ;
 For a Muse and a Grace and a Venus are you, —
 My dear little Mollie Trefusis !’*

So he wrote, the old bard of an old magazine ;
 As a study it not without use is,
 If we wonder a moment who she may have been,
 This same ‘little Molly Trefusis !’

She was Cornish. We know that at once by the ‘Tre ;’
 Then of guessing it scarce an abuse is
 If we say that where Bude bellows back to the sea
 Was the birthplace of Molly Trefusis.

And she lived in the era of patches and bows,
 Not knowing what rouge or ceruse is ;
 For they needed (I hope) but her natural rose,
 The lilies of Molly Trefusis.

And I somehow connect her (I frankly admit
 That the evidence hard to produce is)
 With Bath in its hey-day of Fashion and Wit, —
 This dangerous Molly Trefusis.

I fancy her, radiant in ribbon and knot
 (How charming that old-fashioned puce is !)
 All blooming in laces, fal lals and what not,
 At the PUMP ROOM, — Miss Molly Trefusis.

I fancy her reigning, — a Beauty, — a Toast,
 Where BLADUD's medicinal cruse is ;
 And we know that at least of one Bard it could boast, —
 The Court of Queen Molly Trefusis.

He says she was 'VENUS.' I doubt it. Beside
 (Your rhymer so hopelessly loose is !),
 His 'little' could scarce be to Venus applied,
 If fitly to Molly Trefusis.

No, no. It was HEBE he had in his mind ;
 And fresh as the handmaid of Zeus is,
 And rosy, and rounded, and dimpled, — you 'll find, —
 Was certainly Molly Trefusis !

Then he calls her 'a MUSE.' To the charge I reply
 That we all of us know what a Muse is ;
 It is something too awful, — too acid, — too dry, —
 For sunny-eyed Molly Trefusis.

But 'a GRACE.' There I grant he was probably right
 (The rest but a verse-making ruse is) ;
 It was all that was graceful, — intangible, — light,
 The beauty of Molly Trefusis !

Was she wooed? Who can hesitate much about that,
 Assuredly more than obtuse is ;
 For how could the poet have written so pat
 'My dear little Molly Trefusis !'

And was wed? That I think we must plainly infer,
 Since of suitors the common excuse is
 To take to them Wives. So it happened to her,
 Of course, — 'little Molly Trefusis !'

To the Bard? 'T is unlikely, Apollo, you see,
 In practical matters a goose is ; —
 'T was a knight of the shire, and a hunting J. P.,
 Who carried off Molly Trefusis !

And you 'll find, I conclude, in the '*Gentleman's Mag.*,'
 At the end, where the pick of the news is,
 'On the (blank), at "*the Bath*," to Sir Hilary Brag,
 With a fortune, MISS MOLLY TREFUSIS.'

Thereupon — But no farther the student may pry :
 Love's temple is dark as Eleusis ;
 So here, at the threshold, we part, you and I,
 From 'dear little Molly Trefusis.'

MY BOOKS.

THEY dwell in the odor of camphor,
 They stand in a Sheraton shrine,
 They are 'warranted early editions,'
 These worshipful tomes of mine ; —

In their creamy 'Oxford vellum,'
 In their redolent 'crushed Levant,'
 With their delicate watered linings,
 They are jewels of price, I grant ; —

Blind-tooled and morocco-jointed,
 They have Zaehnsdorf's daintiest dress,
 They are graceful, attenuate, polished,
 But they gather the dust, no less ; —

For the row that I prize is yonder,
 Away on the unglazed shelves,
 The bulged and bruised *octavos*,
 The dear and dumpy twelves, —

Montaigne with his sheepskin blistered,
 And Howell the worse for wear,
 And the worm-drilled Jesuit's Horace,
 And the little old cropped Molière, —

And the Burton I bought for a florin,
 And the Rabelais foxed and fleaed. —
 For the others I never have opened,
 But those are the books I read.

UNE MARQUISE.

A RHYMED MONOLOGUE IN THE LOUVRE.

'Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour.' — MOLIÈRE.

As you sit at your ease,
 O Marquise !
 And the men flock round your knees
 Thick as bees,
 Mute at every word you utter,
 Servants to your least frill flutter,
 'Belle Marquise !' —
 As you sit there growing prouder,
 And your ringed hands glance and go,
 And your fan's *'frou-frou'* sounds louder,
 And your *'beaux yeux'* flash and glow ; —
 Ah, you used them on the Painter,
 As you know,
 For the Sieur Larose spoke fainter,
 Bowing low,
 Thanked Madame and Heaven for Mercy
 That each sitter was not Circe,
 Or at least he told you so ; —
 Growing proud, I say, and prouder
 To the crowd that come and go,
 Dainty Deity of Powder,
 Fickle Queen of Fop and Beau,
 As you sit where lustres strike you,
 Sure to please,
 Do we love you most or like you,
 'Belle Marquise.'

You are fair ; O yes, we know it
 Well, Marquise ;
 For he swore it, your last poet,
 On his knees ;
 And he called all heaven to witness
 Of his ballad and its fitness,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’ —
 You were everything in *ère*
 (With exception of *sévère*), —
 You were *cruelle* and *rebelle*,
 With the rest of rhymes as well ;
 You were ‘ *Reine*, ’ and ‘ *Mère d’Amour* ; ’
 You were ‘ *Vénus à Cythère* ; ’
 ‘ *Sappho mise en Pompadour*, ’
 And ‘ *Minerve en Parabère* ; ’
 You had every grace of heaven
 In your most angelic face,
 With the nameless finer leaven
 Lent of blood and courtly race ;
 And he added, too, in duty,
 Ninon’s wit and Bouffler’s beauty ;
 And La Vallière’s *yeux veloutés*
 Followed these ;
 And you liked it, when he said it
 (On his knees),
 And you kept it, and you read it,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’

Yet with us your toilet graces
 Fail to please,
 And the last of your last faces,
 And your *mise* ;
 For we hold you just as real,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’
 As your *Bergers* and *Bergères*,
Iles d’Amour and *Batelières* ;

As your *parcs*, and your Versailles,
 Gardens, grottos, and *rocailles* ;
 As your Naiads and your trees ; —
 Just as near the old ideal
 Calm and ease,
 As the Venus there, by Coustou,
 That a fan would make quite flighty,
 Is to her the gods were used to, —
 Is to grand Greek Aphroditè,
 Sprung from Seas.
 You are just a porcelain trifle,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’
 Just a thing of puffs and patches,
 Made for madrigals and catches,
 Not for heart-wounds, but for scratches,
 O Marquise !
 Just a pinky porcelain trifle,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’
 Wrought in rarest *rose-Dubarry*,
 Quick at verbal point and parry,
 Clever, doubtless ; — but to marry,
 No, Marquise !

For your Cupid, you have clipped him
 Rouged and patched him, nipped and snipped him,
 And with *chapeau-bras* equipped him,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’
 Just to arm you through your wife-time,
 And the languors of your life-time,
 ‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’
 Say, to trim your toilet tapers,
 Or, — to twist your hair in papers,
 Or, — to win you from the vapors ; —
 As for these,
 You are worth the love they give you,
 Till a fairer face outlive you,

Or a younger grace shall please ;
Till the coming of the crows' feet,
And the backward turn of beaux' feet,

‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’ —

Till your frothed-out life's commotion
Settles down to Ennui's ocean,
Or a dainty sham devotion,

‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’

No: we neither like nor love you,

‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’

Lesser lights we place above you, —

Milder merits better please.

We have passed from *Philosophe*-dom

Into plainer modern days, —

Grown contented in our oafdom,

Giving grace not all the praise ;

And, *en partant*, *Arsinoé*, —

Without malice whatsoever, —

We shall counsel to our Chloë

To be rather good than clever ;

For we find it hard to smother

Just one little thought, *Marquise !*

Wittier perhaps than any other, —

You were neither Wife nor Mother,

‘ *Belle Marquise !* ’

TU QUOQUE.

AN IDYL IN THE CONSERVATORY.

'—*romprons-nous,*
Ou ne romprons-nous pas ?'
 —LE DÉPIT AMOUREUX.

NELLIE.

If I were you, when ladies at the play, sir,
 Beckon and nod, a melodrama through,
 I would not turn abstractedly away, sir,
 If I were you !

FRANK.

If I were you, when persons I affected,
 Wait for three hours to take me down to Kew,
 I would, at least, pretend I recollected,
 If I were you !

NELLIE.

If I were you, when ladies are so lavish,
 Sir, as to keep me every waltz but two,
 I would not dance with *odious* Miss M'Tavish,
 If I were you !

FRANK.

If I were you, who vow you cannot suffer
 Whiff of the best, — the mildest honey-dew,
 I would not dance with smoke-consuming Puffer,
 If I were you !

NELLIE.

If I were you, I would not, sir, be bitter,
 Even to write the Cynical Review ; —

FRANK.

No, I should doubtless find flirtation fitter,
 If I were you !

NELLIE.

Really! You would? Why, Frank, you're quite delightful, —

Hot as Othello, and as black of hue;
Borrow my fan. I would not look so *frightful*,
If I were you.

FRANK.

It is the cause. I mean your chaperon is
Bringing some well-curled juvenile. Adieu!
I shall retire. I'd spare that poor Adonis,
If I were you!

NELLIE.

Go, if you will. At once! And by express, sir!
Where shall it be? To China — or Peru?
Go. I should leave inquirers my address, sir,
If I were you!

FRANK.

No, — I remain. To stay and fight a duel
Seems, on the whole, the proper thing to do —
Ah, you are strong, — I would not then be cruel,
If I were you!

NELLIE.

One does not like one's feelings to be doubted, —

FRANK.

One does not like one's friends to misconstrue, —

NELLIE.

If I confess that I a wee-bit pouted? —

FRANK.

I should admit that I was *piqué*, too.

NELLIE.

Ask me to dance. I'd say no more about it,
If I were you!

[Waltz — *Exeunt*.]

'GOOD NIGHT, BABETTE!'

'*Si vieillesse pouvait!*—'

SCENE.—*A small neat Room. In a high Voltaire Chair sits a white-haired old Gentleman.*

MONSIEUR VIEUXBOIS. BABETTE.

M. VIEUXBOIS (*turning querulously*)

Day of my life! Where *can* she get?
Babette! I say! Babette!—Babette!!

BABETTE (*entering hurriedly*)

Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks
So loud he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Where have you been?

BABETTE

Why, M'sieu' knows:—
April!—Ville-d'Avray!—Ma'am'selle Rose!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Ah! I am old,—and I forget.
Was the place growing green, Babette?

BABETTE

But of a greenness!—yes, M'sieu'!
And then the sky so blue!—so blue!
And when I dropped my *immortelle*,
How the birds sang!

(*Lifting her apron to her eyes.*)

This poor Ma'am'selle!

M. VIEUXBOIS

You're a good girl, Babette, but she,—
She was an Angel, verily.

Sometimes I think I see her yet
 Stand smiling by the cabinet ;
 And once, I know, she peeped and laughed
 Betwixt the curtains —

Where 's the draught ?

(*She gives him a cup.*)

Now I shall sleep, I think, Babette ; —
 Sing me your Norman *chansonnette*.

BABETTE (*sings*)

' Once at the *Angelus*
 (*Ere I was dead*),
Angels all glorious
Came to my Bed ; —
Angels in blue and white
Crowned on the Head.'

M. VIEUXBOIS (*drowsily*)

' She was an Angel ' — ' Once she laughed ' —
 What, was I dreaming ?

Where 's the draught ?

BABETTE (*showing the empty cup*)

The draught, M'sieu' ?

M. VIEUXBOIS

' How I forget ! '

' I am so old ! ' But sing, Babette !

BABETTE (*sings*)

' One was the *Friend I left*
Stark in the Snow ;
One was the Wife that died
Long, — long ago ;
One was the Love I lost —
How could she know ? '

M. VIEUXBOIS (*murmuring*)

Ah, Paul! — old Paul! — Eulalie too!
And Rose! — And O! ‘the sky so blue!’

BABETTE (*sings*)

‘*One had my Mother’s eyes,
Wistful and mild;
One had my Father’s face;
One was a Child:
All of them bent to me, —
Bent down and smiled!*’
(He is asleep!)

M. VIEUXBOIS (*almost inaudibly*)

‘How I forget!’
‘I am so old!’ — ‘Good-night, Babette!’

BEFORE SEDAN.

‘*The dead hand clasped a letter.*’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

HERE, in this leafy place,
Quiet he lies,
Cold, with his sightless face
Turned to the skies;
’T is but another dead;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence, —
Kings must have slaves;
Kings climb to eminence
Over men’s graves:
So this man’s eye is dim; —
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,
There, at his side?
Paper his hand had clutched
Tight ere he died; —
Message or wish, may be; —
Smooth the folds out and see.

Hardly the worst of us
Here could have smiled! —
Only the tremulous
Words of a child; —
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,
Morning and night,
His — her dead father's — kiss;
Tries to be bright,
Good to mamma, and sweet.
That is all. 'Marguerite.'

Ah, if beside the dead
Slumbered the pain!
Ah, if the hearts that bled
Slept with the slain!
If the grief died; — but no; —
Death will not have it so.

AN UNFINISHED SONG.

'Cantat Deo qui vivit Deo.'

Yes, he was well-nigh gone and near his rest,
The year could not renew him; nor the cry
Of building nightingales about the nest;
Nor that soft freshness of the May-wind's sigh,

That fell before the garden scents, and died
Between the ampler leafage of the trees :
All these he knew-not, lying open-eyed,
Deep in a dream that was not pain nor ease,

But death not yet. Outside a woman talked —
His wife she was — whose clicking needles sped
To faded phrases of complaint that balked
My rising words of comfort. Overhead,

A cage that hung amid the jasmine stars
Trembled a little, and a blossom dropped.
Then notes came pouring through the wicker bars,
Climbed half a rapid arc of song, and stopped.

‘Is it a thrush?’ I asked. ‘A thrush,’ she said.
‘That was Will’s tune. Will taught him that before
He left the doorway settle for his bed,
Sick as you see, and could n’t teach him more.

‘He’d bring his Bible here o’ nights, would Will,
Following the light, and whiles when it was dark
And days were warm, he’d sit there whistling still,
Teaching the bird. He whistled like a lark.’

‘Jack! Jack!’ A joyous flutter stirred the cage,
Shaking the blossoms down. The bird began;
The woman turned again to want and wage,
And in the inner chamber sighed the man.

How clear the song was! Musing as I heard,
My fancies wandered from the droning wife
To sad comparison of man and bird, —
The broken song, the uncompleted life,

That seemed a broken song; and of the two,
My thought a moment deemed the bird more blest,
That, when the sun shone, sang the notes it knew,
Without desire or knowledge of the rest.

Nay, happier man. For him futurity
 Still hides a hope that this his earthly praise
 Finds heavenly end, for surely will not He,
 Solver of all, above his Flower of Days,

Teach him the song that no one living knows?
 Let the man die, with that half-chant of his,—
 What Now discovers not Hereafter shows,
 And God will surely teach him more than this.

Again the bird. I turned, and passed along;
 But Time and Death, Eternity and Change,
 Talked with me ever, and the climbing song
 Rose in my hearing, beautiful and strange.

THE WANDERER.

RONDEL.

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
 The old, old Love that we knew of yore!
 We see him stand by the open door,
 With his great eyes sad, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
 He fain would lie as he lay before;—
 Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
 The old, old Love that we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall help us from over-telling
 That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
 E'en as we doubt in our heart once more,
 With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
 Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

THE CHILD-MUSICIAN.

HE had played for his lordship's levee,
 He had played for her ladyship's whim,
 Till the poor little head was heavy,
 And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peaked and eerie,
 And the large eyes strange and bright,
 And they said — too late — 'He is weary!
 He shall rest for, at least, To-night!'

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,
 As they watched in the silent room,
 With the sound of a strained cord breaking,
 A something snapped in the gloom.

'T was a string of his violoncello,
 And they heard him stir in his bed: —
 'Make room for a tired little fellow,
 Kind God! —' was the last that he said.

WITH PIPE AND FLUTE.

RONDEAU.

WITH pipe and flute the rustic Pan
 Of old made music sweet for man;
 And wonder hushed the warbling bird,
 And closer drew the calm-eyed herd, —
 The rolling river slower ran.

Ah! would, — ah! would, a little span,
 Some air of Arcady could fan
 This age of ours, too seldom stirred
 With pipe and flute!

But now for gold we plot and plan;
And from Beersheba unto Dan,
 Apollo's self might pass unheard,
 Or find the night-jar's note preferred; —
Not so it fared, when time began,
 With pipe and flute!

ANDREW LANG.

*THE FORTUNATE ISLANDS.*²¹

A DREAM IN JUNE.

IN twilight of the longest day
I lingered over Lucian,
Till ere the dawn a dreamy way
My spirit found, untrod of man,
Between the green sky and the gray.

Amid the soft dusk suddenly
More light than air I seemed to sail,
Afloat upon the ocean sky,
While through the faint blue, clear and pale,
I saw the mountain clouds go by :
My barque had thought for helm and sail,
And one mist wreath for canopy.

Like torches on a marble floor
Reflected, so the wild stars shone,
Within the abysmal hyaline,
Till the day widened more and more,
And sank to sunset, and was gone,
And then, as burning beacons shine
On summits of a mountain isle,
A light to folk on sea that fare,
So the sky's beacons for a while
Burned in these islands of the air.

Then from a starry island set
Where one swift tide of wind there flows,
Came scent of lily and violet,
Narcissus, hyacinth, and rose,
Laurel, and myrtle buds, and vine,
So delicate is the air and fine :
And forests of all fragrant trees
Sloped seaward from the central hill,
And ever clamorous were these

With singing of glad birds ; and still
Such music came as in the woods
Most lonely, consecrate to Pan,
The Wind makes, in his many moods,
Upon the pipes some shepherd Man,
Hangs up, in thanks for victory !
On these shall mortals play no more,
But the Wind doth touch them, over and o'er,
And the Wind's breath in the reeds will sigh.

Between the daylight and the dark
That island lies in silver air,
And suddenly my magic barque
Wheeled, and ran in, and grounded there ;
And by me stood the sentinel
Of them who in the island dwell ;
All smiling did he bind my hands,
With rushes green and rosy bands,
They have no harsher bonds than these
The people of the pleasant lands
Within the wash of the airy seas !

Then was I to their city led :
Now all of ivory and gold
The great walls were that garlanded
The temples in their shining fold,

(Each fane of beryl built, and each
Girt with its grove of shadowy beech,)
And all about the town, and through,
There flowed a River fed with dew,
As sweet as roses, and as clear
As mountain crystals pure and cold,
And with his waves that water kissed
The gleaming altars of amethyst
That smoke with victims all the year,
And sacred are to the Gods of old.

There sat three Judges by the Gate,
And I was led before the Three,
And they but looked on me, and straight
The rosy bonds fell down from me
Who, being innocent, was free ;
And I might wander at my will
About that City on the hill,
Among the happy people clad
In purple weeds of woven air
Hued like the webs that Twilight weaves
At shut of languid summer eves,
So light their raiment seemed ; and glad
Was every face I looked on there !

There was no heavy heat, no cold,
The dwellers there wax never old,
Nor wither with the waning time,
But each man keeps that age he had
When first he won the fairy clime.
The Night falls never from on high,
Nor ever burns the heat of noon.
But such soft light eternally
Shines, as in silver dawns of June
Before the Sun hath climbed the sky !

Within these pleasant streets and wide,
The souls of Heroes go and come,
Even they that fell on either side
Beneath the walls of Ilium;
And sunlike in that shadowy isle
The face of Helen and her smile
Makes glad the souls of them that knew
Grief for her sake a little while!
And all true Greeks and wise are there;
And with his hand upon the hair
Of Phædo, saw I Socrates,
About him many youths and fair,
Hylas, Narcissus, and with these
Him whom the quoit of Phœbus slew
By fleet Eurotas, unaware!

All these their mirth and pleasure made
Within the plain Elysian,
The fairest meadow that may be,
With all green fragrant trees for shade
And every scented wind to fan,
And sweetest flowers to strew the lea;
The soft Winds are their servants fleet
To fetch them every fruit at will
And water from the river chill;
And every bird that singeth sweet,
Throstle, and merle, and nightingale,
Brings blossoms from the dewy vale, —
Lily, and rose, and asphodel —
With these doth each guest twine his crown
And wreath his cup, and lay him down
Beside some friend he loveth well.

There with the shining Souls I lay
When, lo, a Voice that seemed to say,
In far off haunts of Memory,

*Whoso doth taste the Dead Men's bread,
Shall dwell for ever with these Dead,
Nor ever shall his body lie
Beside his friends, on the gray hill
Where rains weep, and the curlews shrill
And the brown water wanders by!*

Then did a new soul in me wake,
The dead men's bread I feared to break,
Their fruit I would not taste indeed
Were it but a pomegranate seed.
Nay, not with these I made my choice
To dwell for ever and rejoice,
For otherwhere the River rolls
That girds the home of Christian souls,
And these my whole heart seeks are found
On otherwise enchanted ground.

Even so I put the cup away,
The vision wavered, dimmed, and broke,
And, nowise sorrowing, I woke
While, gray among the ruins gray
Chill through the dwellings of the dead,
The Dawn crept o'er the Northern sea,
Then, in a moment, flushed to red,
Flushed all the broken minster old,
And turned the shattered stones to gold,
And wakened half the world with me!

L'ENVOI.

TO E. W. G.

Who also had rhymed on the 'Fortunate Islands' of Lucian.

*EACH in the self-same field we glean,
The field of the Samosatene,
Each something takes and something leaves,
And this must choose, and that forego*

*In Lucian's visionary sheaves,
 To twine a modern posy so;
 But all my gleanings, truth to tell,
 Are mixed with mournful asphodel,
 While yours are wreathed with poppies red,
 With flowers that Helen's feet have kissed,
 With leaves of vine that garlanded
 The Syrian Pantagruelist,
 The sage who laughed the world away,
 Who mocked at Gods, and men, and care,
 More sweet of voice than Rabelais,
 And lighter-hearted than Voltaire.*

BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE.

OUR youth began with tears and sighs,
 With seeking what we could not find;
 Our verses all were threnodies,
 In elegiacs still we whined;
 Our ears were deaf, our eyes were blind,
 We sought and knew not what we sought.
 We marvel, now we look behind:
 Life's more amusing than we thought!

Oh, foolish youth, untimely wise!
 Oh, phantoms of the sickly mind!
 What? not content with seas and skies,
 With rainy clouds and southern wind,
 With common cares and faces kind,
 With pains and joys each morning brought?
 Ah, old, and worn, and tired we find
 Life's more amusing than we thought!

Though youth 'turns spectre-thin and dies,'
 To mourn for youth we're not inclined;
 We set our souls on salmon flies,
 We whistle where we once repined.

Confound the woes of human-kind !
 By Heaven we 're 'well deceived,' I wot;
 Who hum, contented or resigned,
 'Life 's more amusing than we thought !'

ENVOY.

O nate mecum, worn and lined
 Our faces show, but *that* is naught ;
 Our hearts are young 'neath wrinkled rind :
 Life 's more amusing than we thought !

MAN AND THE ASCIDIAN.

A MORALITY.

'THE Ancestor remote of Man,'
 Says Darwin, 'is th' Ascidian,'
 A scanty sort of water-beast
 That, ninety million years at least
 Before Gorillas came to be,
 Went swimming up and down the sea.

Their ancestors the pious praise,
 And like to imitate their ways ;
 How, then, does our first parent live,
 What lesson has his life to give ?

Th' Ascidian tadpole, young and gay,
 Doth Life with one bright eye survey,
 His consciousness has easy play.
 He 's sensitive to grief and pain,
 Has tail, and spine, and bears a brain,
 And everything that fits the state
 Of creatures we call vertebrate.
 But age comes on ; with sudden shock
 He sticks his head against a rock !
 His tail drops off, his eye drops in,
 His brain 's absorbed into his skin ;

He does not move, nor feel, nor know
 The tidal water's ebb and flow,
 But still abides, unstirred, alone,
 A sucker sticking to a stone.

And we, his children, truly we
 In youth are, like the Tadpole, free.
 And where we would we blithely go,
 Have brains and hearts, and feel and know.
 Then Age comes on ! ' To Habit we
 Affix ourselves and are not free ;
 Th' Ascidian 's rooted to a rock,
 And we are bond-slaves of the clock ;
 Our rocks are Medicine — Letters — Law,
 From these our heads we cannot draw :
 Our loves drop off, our hearts drop in,
 And daily thicker grows our skin.

Ah, scarce we live, we scarcely know
 The wild world's moving ebb and flow,
 The clanging currents ring and shock,
 But we are rooted to the rock.
 And thus at ending of his span,
 Blind, deaf, and indolent, does Man
 Revert to the Ascidian.

BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA.

THERE 's a joy without canker or cark,
 There 's a pleasure eternally new,
 'T is to gloat on the glaze and the mark
 Of china that 's ancient and blue ;
 Unchipped all the centuries through
 It has passed, since the chime of it rang,
 And they fashioned it, figure and hue,
 In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

These dragons (their tails you remark,
 Into bunches of gilly-flowers grew), —
 When Noah came out of the ark,
 Did these lie in wait for his crew?
 They snorted, they snapped, and they slew,
 They were mighty of fin and of fang,
 And their portraits Celestials drew
 In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

Here 's a pot with a cot in a park,
 In a park where the peach-blossoms blew,
 Where the lovers eloped in the dark,
 Lived, died, and were changed into two
 Bright birds that eternally flew
 Through the boughs of the may, as they sang;
 'T is a tale was undoubtedly true
 In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

ENVOY.

Come, snarl at my ecstasies, do,
 Kind critic, your ' tongue has a tang ; '
 But — a sage never heeded a shrew
 In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

BALLADE OF SLEEP.

THE hours are passing slow,
 I hear their weary tread
 Clang from the tower, and go
 Back to their kinsfolk dead.
 Sleep! death's twin brother dread!
 Why dost thou scorn me so?
 The wind's voice overhead
 Long wakeful here I know,
 And music from the steep

Where waters fall and flow.
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

All sounds that might bestow
Rest on the fevered bed,
All slumb'rous sounds and low
Are mingled here and wed,
And bring no drowsihead.
Shy dreams flit to and fro
With shadowy hair disspread;
With wistful eyes that glow,
And silent robes that sweep.
Thou wilt not hear me; no?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

What cause hast thou to show
Of sacrifice unsped?
Of all thy slaves below
I most have laborèd
With service sung and said;
Have culled such buds as blow,
Soft poppies white and red,
Where thy still gardens grow,
And Lethe's waters weep.
Why, then, art thou my foe?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

ENVOY.

Prince, ere the dark be shred
By golden shafts, ere low
And long the shadows creep:
Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft-footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep!

BALLADE OF HIS CHOICE OF A SEPULCHRE.

HERE I'd come when weariest !
Here the breast
Of the Windburg 's tufted over
Deep with bracken ; here his crest
Takes the west,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Silent here are lark and plover ;
In the cover
Deep below the cushat best
Loves his mate, and croons above her
O'er their nest,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Bring me here, Life's tired-out guest,
To the blest
Bed that waits the weary rover,
Here should failure be confessed ;
Ends my quest,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover !

ENVOY.

Friend, or stranger kind, or lover,
Ah, fulfil a last behest,
Let me rest
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover !

IN ITHACA.

‘And now I am greatly repenting that ever I left my life with thee, and the immortality thou didst promise me.’ — *Letter of Odysseus to Calypso. Luciani Vera Historia.*

’T Is thought Odysseus when the strife was o’er
With all the waves and wars, a weary while,
Grew restless in his disenchanted isle,
And still would watch the sunset, from the shore,
Go down the ways of gold, and evermore
His sad heart followed after, mile on mile,
Back to the Goddess of the magic wile,
Calypso, and the love that was of yore.

Thou too, thy haven gained, must turn thee yet
To look across the sad and stormy space,
Years of a youth as bitter as the sea,
Ah, with a heavy heart, and eyelids wet,
Because, within a fair forsaken place
The life that might have been is lost to thee.

HENRY CHOLMONDELEY-PENNELL.

THE NIGHT MAIL NORTH.

EUSTON SQUARE, 1840.

Now then, take your seats ! for Glasgow and the North ;
Chester ! — Carlisle ! — Holyhead, — and the wild Frith of
Forth :

‘ Clap on the steam and sharp ’s the word,
You men in scarlet cloth : —

‘ Are there any more pas — sengers,
For the Night — Mail — to the North ! ’

Are there any more passengers ?
Yes three — but they can’t get in, —
Too late, too late ! — How they bellow and knock,
They might as well try to soften a rock
As the heart of that fellow in green.

For the Night Mail North ? what ho —
(No use to struggle, you can’t get thro’)
My young and lusty one —
Whither away from the gorgeous town ? —

‘ For the lake and the stream and the heather brown,
And the double-barrelled gun ! ’

For the Night Mail North, I say ?
You, with the eager eyes —
You with the haggard face and pale ? —

' From a ruined hearth and a starving brood,
A Crime and a felon's gaol !'

For the Night Mail North, old man? —
Old statue of despair —
Why tug and strain at the iron gate?
' *My daughter !!*'

Ha ! too late, too late,
She is gone, you may safely swear ;
She has given you the slip, d' you hear ?
She has left you alone in your wrath, —
And she 's off and away, with a glorious start,
To the home of her choice, with the man of her heart,
By the Night Mail North !

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Wh——ish, R——ush,
Wh——ish, R——ush —
What 's all that hullabaloo ?
' Keep fast the gates there — who is this
That insists on bursting thro' ?'

A desperate man whom none may withstand,
For look, there is something clenched in his hand —
Tho' the bearer is ready to drop —
He waves it wildly to and fro,
And hark ! how the crowd are shouting below —
' Back !'

And back the opposing barriers go,
' *A reprieve for the Cannongate murderer, Ho !*
In the Queen's name —

STOP.

Another has confessed the crime.'

Whish — rush — whish — rush —
The Guard has caught the flutt'ring sheet,

Now forward and northward! fierce and fleet,
 Thro' the mist and the dark and the driving sleet,
 As if life and death were in it;
 'T is a splendid race! a race against Time, —
 And a thousand to one we win it:
 Look at those flitting ghosts, —
 The white-armed finger-posts —
 If we 're moving the eighth of an inch, I say,
 We 're going a mile a minute!
 A mile a minute — for life or death —
 Away, away! though it catches one's breath,
 The man shall not die in his wrath:
 The quivering carriages rock and reel —
 Hurrah! for the rush of the grinding steel!
 The thundering crank, and the mighty wheel! —

Are there any more pas-sengers
 For the Night — Mail — to the North?

THE ROSE OF ETTRICK.

FULL fresh and fair thy wreath to-day,
 Old Newark's ivied tower;
 Still blooms the leaf and buds the spray
 In Yarrow's birchen bower;
 By Ettrick-bank the soft sweet may
 Their whites and crimsons jostle —
 Ah!

But softer, sweeter seems to me
 The bloom thy cheek wears changefully,
 Sweet Mary Russell:
 And nothing half so fresh and fair
 Draws loving life from perfumed air.

To many a breeze your sylvan song
 Makes music, Lindan beeches,
 Full many a streamlet trills along,
 Bright Tweed, thy pebbly reaches ;
 And here the lark sings loud and clear,
 There fluteth low the throstle —
 Ah !

But clearer comes thy voice to me
 And tenderer thy minstrelsy,
 Sweet Mary Russell :
 For that has still a touch love-lorn,
 A charm, of winds nor waters born.

And winter woods shall mourn their frost,
 All leaf snow-burial craving ;
 The thrush's tuneful voice is lost
 In the hoarse torrent's raving ;
 And fairest things must fade, and lie
 At last on death's cold tressle —
 Ah !

But, Beautiful, *thou* shalt not die —
 I give thee immortality,
 Sweet Mary Russell !
 These simple flow'rs such merit claim,
 Fadeless as love, *immortelles* is their name.

TO A LADY WITH A RING.

SWEET Valentine, dear lady mine,
 Love lays an offering at your shrine —
 Yet mete not by this span of gold
 That which would reach thro' years untold,
 Would burn when life itself is cold.
 Not with the dazzling fitful gleam
 That gilds the stripling's fever-dream

(For love — the dream-love of the boy —
 Is but a glittering summer toy) —
 But with the strong and steady glow,
 But with the deep and tender flow,
 That a man's heart alone can know,
 Pouring his soul out at her feet
 Whose smile can make all dark things sweet —
 Love undivided, close and dear
 With ready arm to guide and cheer,
 His breast her shield from every fear :
 Love changeless still, where change is rife,
 Thro' storm and calm, thro' peace and strife,
 For grief for joy, for death for life !
 Love breathed in one soft whisper — wife.

THE SECRET OF SAFETY.

You ask me to declare the spell
 By which I sleep unhaunted slumbers :
 'Still fancy free ! — the secret tell ?'
 The secret is, fair Floribel,
 That Safety lies in numbers.

It is not that my heart is tough,
 I dare not make such false confession,
 Or that it's formed of such soft stuff
 It is not durable enough
 To keep a firm impression.

But Beauty 's like the bloom that flies,
 And Love's a butterfly that hasteth ;
 From lip to lip the trifle hies
 And sweet by sweet the garden tries,
 But each one only tasteth. —

If long I loitered here, I know
 I might not sleep unhaunted slumbers, —
 At least 't were rash to try, fair Flo' —
 So now I'm going to the Row,
 Where 'Safety lies in numbers !'

LITTLE BO-PEEP.

'LITTLE Bo-peep has lost her sheep,'
 And some one or other 's lost little Bo-peep —
 Or she 'd never be wand'ring at twelve o'clock
 With a golden crook, and a velvet frock,
 In a diamond necklace, in such a rout, —
 In diamond buckles, and high-heeled shoes
 (And a dainty wee foot in them too, if you choose,
 And an ankle a sculptor might rave about), —
 But I think she 's a little witch, you know,
 With her broomstick-crook and her high-heeled shoe
 And the mischievous fun that flashes thro'
 The wreaths of her amber hair — don't you?
 No wonder the flock follows little Bo-peep, —
 Such a shepherd would turn all the world into sheep,
 To trot at her heels and look up in the face
 Of their pastor for — goodness knows what, say for grace? —
 Her face that recalls in its reds and its blues,
 And its setting of gold, 'Esmeralda' by Grenze. —

There you 've Little Bo-peep, dress, diamonds, and all,
 As I met her last night at the Fancy Ball.

'FAITE À PEINDRE.'

'MADE to be painted' — a Millais might give
 A fortune to study that exquisite face —
 The face is a fortune — a Lawrence might live
 Anew in each line of that figure's still grace.

The pose is perfection, a model each limb,
 From the delicate foot to the classical head;
But the almond blue eyes, with their smiling, look dim,
 And lips to be *loved* want a trifle more red.

Statuesque ? no, a Psyche, let 's say, in repose, —
 A Psyche whose Cupid beseeches in vain, —
We sigh as the nightingale sighs to the rose
 That declines (it 's averred) to give sighs back again. —

If the wind shook the rose ? then a shower would fall
 Of sweet-scented petals to gather who list ;
If a sigh shook my Psyche ? she 'd yawn, that is all,
 She 's made to be painted — and not to be kist.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

NOTE I, PAGE 3. — *Sohrab and Rustum* contains about nine hundred lines. The following is the author's note appended to the poem:—

‘The story of Sohrab and Rustum is told in Sir John Malcolm’s “History of Persia,” as follows: The young Sohrab was the fruit of one of Rustum’s early amours. He had left his mother, and sought fame under the banners of Afrasiab, whose armies he commanded, and soon obtained a renown beyond that of all contemporary heroes but his father. He had carried death and dismay into the ranks of the Persians, and had terrified the boldest warriors of that country, before Rustum encountered him, which at last that hero resolved to do, under a feigned name. They met three times. The first time they parted by mutual consent, though Sohrab had the advantage; the second, the youth obtained a victory, but granted life to his unknown father; the third was fatal to Sohrab, who, when writhing in the pangs of death, warned his conqueror to shun the vengeance that is inspired by parental woes, and bade him dread the rage of the mighty Rustum, who must soon learn that he had slain his son Sohrab. These words, we are told, were as death to the aged hero; and when he recovered from a trance, he called in despair for proofs of what Sohrab had said. The afflicted and dying youth tore open his mail, and showed his father a seal which his mother had placed on his arm when she discovered to him the secret of his birth, and bade him seek his father. The sight of his own signet rendered Rustum quite frantic; he cursed himself, attempting to put an end to his existence, and was only prevented by the efforts of his expiring son. After Sohrab’s death, he burned his tents and all his goods, and carried the corpse to Seistan, where it was interred: the army of Turan was, agreeably to the last request of Sohrab, permitted to cross the Oxus unmolested. To reconcile us to the improbability of this tale, we are informed that Rustum could have no idea his son was in existence. The mother of Sohrab had written to him that her child was a daughter, fearing to lose her darling infant if she revealed the truth; and Rustum, as before stated,

fought under a feigned name, a usage not uncommon in the chivalrous combats of those days.'

NOTE 2, PAGE 9. — The author has the following note appended to *The Scholar-Gypsy* : —

" 'There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there, and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gypsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gypsies ; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others ; that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned.' — *Glanvil's Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661."

NOTE 3, PAGE 21. — The full title is *The Book of Orm, a Prelude to the Epic*. It consists of nine books, and contains some four thousand lines. The purpose of the book is to depict in a mystical form the conflict of mind and matter, the doctrine of Metaphysical Evil, and the final triumph of good over evil, through the agency of love. The *Inscription*, page 21, is taken from the first edition ; in later editions only the first verse is printed.

NOTE 4, PAGE 38. — The *Coruiskien Sonnets* originally formed Book VII. of the *Book of Orm*, but in the last edition of Mr. Buchanan's poetical works they are printed by themselves. They contain thirty-three different sonnets.

NOTE 5, PAGE 47. — *The Epic of Hades* consists of three books, — Book I., Tartarus ; Book II., Hades ; Book III., Olympus, — and contains some five thousand lines. The purpose of the book is to explain the various symbolismes of the ancient myths.

NOTE 6, PAGE 62. — *The Ode of Life* consists of eleven separate odes, and contains about two thousand lines.

NOTE 7, PAGE 65. — The full title is *The Light of Asia; or The Great Renunciation (Mahâbhinishkramana). Being The Life and Teaching of Gautama, Prince of India and Founder of Buddhism (as told in verse by an Indian Buddhist)*. It consists of eight books, and contains about four thousand lines. The poem is supposed to relate the various incidents in Gautama's life, from the time of his birth to his return home after he had completed his renunciation and founded Buddhism.

NOTE 8, PAGE 82. — *The City of Dreadful Night* consists of a brief proem and twenty-one short cantos, and contains about one thousand lines. The purpose of the poem is to portray a condition of absolute and hopeless despair under the allegory of a City.

NOTE 9, PAGE 97. — The full title is *Sunday Up the River: an Idyll of Cockaigne*. It consists of twenty brief cantos and contains about five hundred lines, and is a description of a Londoner's summer Sunday excursion out of town.

NOTE 10, PAGE 104. — *The Human Tragedy* consists of what the author calls four acts, as follows: Act I. Protagonist: Love. Place: England. Time: June — November, 1857. Act II. Protagonists: Love — Religion. Place: Spiaggiascura — Milan — Florence. Time: March, 1858 — May, 1859. Act III. Protagonists: Love — Religion — Country. Place: Capri — Mentana. Time: October — November, 1867. Act IV. Protagonists: Love — Religion — Country — Mankind. Place: Rome — Paris. Time: August, 1870 — Close of May, 1871. The poem contains twelve hundred and twenty-seven eight-line stanzas, of which Act I. contains 241; Act II., 291; Act III., 354; Act IV., 341. The following is a synopsis of the story told in the poem: Godfrid, the son of an English Roman Catholic family, and educated in that faith, has, on account of conscientious scruples, refrained from all outward observances of the forms of that religion. While in a state of doubt and unrest he meets Olive, the daughter of an English squire, and for a time he imagines that in loving her he can regain the peace which he lost with the faith of his childhood. He becomes convinced, however, that his passion for Olive is simply transitory; and Olive herself marries Gilbert, a healthy, sport-loving English squire, and utterly indifferent to all questions of State or Church, except such as are brought under his immediate notice by the circumstances of his life. Godfrid seeks Spiaggiascura, where he meets Olympia, a young and beautiful Italian girl, who is a devout daughter of the Church and known as Madonna's Child, from her habit of keeping the altar in the Chapel of Maria Stella Maris

supplied with fresh flowers each day. Godfrid, becoming passionately in love, proposes marriage to Olympia, who consents on condition that Godfrid shall openly and actively renew the faith of his childhood. In the hope that some solution may be found for his spiritual doubts, Olympia, suggests that he shall visit Milan and consult a reverend father in that place who had once been her own spiritual instructor. They perform the journey together, but Godfrid is unable to overcome his conscientious scruples, and Olympia refuses to marry him except he comply absolutely with the conditions upon which she had insisted in the first instance. They then separate, and Godfrid visits Florence, where he becomes interested in the struggles of the 'Young Italy' party, and returning to Spiaggiascura finds that Olympia has joined the Sisters of Charity and left the place. On his return to Florence, he accidentally meets Olive, who informs him of the serious illness of her husband. Godfrid successfully nurses Gilbert into convalescence, when Olive suddenly dies. Gilbert and Godfrid become firm friends and spend some time together at Capri, where the former, under the tuition of the latter, begins to take an interest in Italian politics. Gilbert's interest in the Italian cause becomes intensified by a personal bias, as he has formed an ardent attachment for Miriam, an ultra-Republican, and christened 'The Orphan of the Isle.' They all three, Godfrid, Gilbert, and Miriam, link their fortunes with Garibaldi on his escape from the islet of Caprera in the latter part of 1867, and are present at the battle of Mentana. In that battle Gilbert is seriously wounded, and while in a dying condition, as it is supposed at the time, is married to Miriam in the church at Mentana, which has been extemporized into a hospital. Godfrid has been left for dead on the battle-field, where he is discovered by Olympia, who has visited it in the discharge of her duties as a Sister of Charity. He is secretly conveyed to a convent at Rome by Olympia, who nurses him back again to health. Gilbert, who recovered from his wounds, and Miriam seek Paris at the time of the formation of the Provisional Government after the surrender at Sedan, having tried in vain to persuade Godfrid to accompany them thither. Subsequently Olympia is assigned to Paris by her *Supérieure*, and Godfrid accompanies her as escort to the French capital. When there he tries in vain, after the city has fallen into the hands of the Commune, to persuade Gilbert and Miriam to abandon a lost and foolish cause. Gilbert refuses, insisting that it was cowardly to desert his Republican friends at such a juncture, in spite of the extremes of which they had been guilty. The knowledge that she is about to become a mother makes Miriam anxious to fly to some place of safety; but she carefully conceals her feelings from Gilbert, although making Godfrid acquainted with them. Godfrid then joins the Red Cross Legion, in

order that he may accompany Olympia on her errands of mercy, and at the same time keep a guard over his two friends. During the final sortie, in the latter part of May, 1871, when the French army succeeded in forcing an entrance into Paris, Godfrid informs Gilbert of Miriam's condition. This knowledge serves to overcome Gilbert's scruples about flight, and he accepts Godfrid's Red Cross badge, upon receiving his assurance that he is safe without it, and succeeds in making good his escape with Miriam. Godfrid, and Olympia who had accompanied him on his mission to persuade Gilbert to flee for Miriam's sake, are then killed by the final charge of the French army upon the insurgents.

NOTE II, PAGE 116. — *Atalanta in Calydon* is a tragedy modelled on the antique, and contains about two thousand five hundred lines. The following is the argument prefixed to the tragedy by the author.

'Althæa, daughter of Thestius and Eurythemis, Queen of Calydon, being with child of Meleager her first-born son, dreamed that she brought forth a brand burning; and upon his birth came the three Fates and prophesied of him three things, namely these: that he should have great strength of his hands, and good fortune in this life, and that he should live no longer when the brand then in the fire was consumed; wherefore his mother plucked it forth and kept it by her. And the child being a man grown sailed with Jason after the fleece of gold, and won himself great praise of all men living; and when the tribes of the north and west made war upon Ætolia, he fought against their army and scattered it. But Artemis, having at the first stirred up these tribes to war against CENEUS, King of Calydon, because he had offered sacrifice to all the gods saving her alone, but her he had forgotten to honor, was yet more wroth because of the destruction of this army, and sent upon the land of Calydon a wild boar which slew many and wasted all their increase, but him could none slay, and many went against him and perished. Then were all the chief men of Greece gathered together, and among them Atalanta, daughter of Iasius, the Arcadian, a virgin; for whose sake Artemis let slay the boar, seeing she favored the maiden greatly; and Meleager having despatched it gave the spoil thereof to Atalanta, as one beyond measure enamoured of her; but the brethren of Althæa his mother, Toxeus and Plexippus, with such others as misliked that she only should bear off the praise whereas many had borne the labor, laid wait for her to take away her spoil; but Meleager fought against them and slew them: whom when Althæa their sister beheld and knew to be slain of her son, she waxed for wrath and sorrow like as one mad, and taking the brand whereby the measure of her son's life was meted to him, she cast it upon a fire; and with the wasting thereof his life likewise wasted away, that

being brought back to his father's house he died in a brief space; and his mother also endured not long after for very sorrow; and this was his end, and the end of that hunting.'

NOTE 12, PAGE 121. — *Memorial Verses on the death of Théophile Gautier*. In this poem the author has appended the following notes explanatory of the allusions contained in the respective lines: page 28, verse 4, line 1, *La Morte Amoureuse*; Id., verse 5, line 1, *Une Nuit de Cleopâtre*; Id., verse 6, line 1, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*.

NOTE 13, PAGE 130. — *The Prophecy of St. Oran* is divided into four parts, of which Pt. I. contains forty-five stanzas, Pt. II. forty-two, Pt. III. thirty-nine, Pt. IV. twenty-three, and is founded upon one of the legends of St. Columba, and has for its theme the Gælic proverb, 'Earth, earth on the mouth of Oran that he may blab no more.' The story as told in the poem is as follows: A Pictish Chieftain immediately after his baptism by St. Columba suddenly dies, and Mona, his granddaughter, is inconsolable at his loss. Oran, the youngest and most saintly of the brotherhood, tries to comfort her, but, becoming greatly fascinated with her beauty, flees from her in order to avoid temptation. St. Columba subsequently decides to build a church on the site of an ancient burying-ground in the island of Iona; but before the work is completed a Pict comes to the brotherhood with a tale of famine and fever among his people, and begs for aid. Oran is selected to accompany the Pict home, with the relief craved for, and in the course of his mission again meets Mona, and this time yields to temptation and breaks his vow. A series of accidents then retard the completion of the chapel, and St. Columba concludes that a curse rests upon the work on account of the secret sin of some member of the brotherhood. Each monk however strenuously denies that he is the guilty cause, when Mona suddenly appears in their midst and discloses her relations with Oran. In reply to the question of Columba, Oran insists that Mona's story is false, whereupon she is sentenced by Columba to be cast from a high cliff into the sea. Before the execution of the sentence Oran confesses his guilt, and he is sentenced by his Superior to be buried alive in the ancient burying-ground, on the site of which the chapel is in course of construction. Mona subsequently contrives to secretly remove the earth which covers Oran, and, when three days have elapsed since his interment, he rises from the grave and addresses the monks on their entrance into the chapel. He is then reinterred by order of Columba, and Mona in despair throws herself into the sea.

NOTE 14, PAGE 151. — *Firdausi in Exile* contains fifty-four stanzas, and was written as an introduction to Miss Helen Zimmern's prose para-

phrase of the *Shah Nameh*, published as *The Epic of Kings*, 1883. The following is an outline of the story which is told in the poem: The Shah Mahmoud promised the Persian poet Firdausi a thousand drachms of gold for every thousand couplets which the poet should make in versifying the entire chronicles of the realm. When the task was completed, Mahmoud, at the suggestion of his cunning minister Hasan, substituted silver for gold in payment of the sixty thousand verses furnished. Firdausi, indignant at the theft involved in the substitution, distributes the silver among the persons who had brought it, although he knew that such an expression of contempt was an insult to the Shah punishable with death. Although Mahmoud overlooks the insult, Firdausi was privately warned that it would be wise to flee, and he follows the advice, having first placed in the hand of the Shah's chamberlain a sealed letter, which Mahmoud was not to open for a period of thirty days. At the expiration of that time Mahmoud opens the letter, and finds it contains a stinging satire in verse, which so enrages him that he resolves to kill the poet. Firdausi, in the mean time, having wandered from town to town, finally takes up his residence with the Caliph at Bagdad. Mahmoud, having learned of this, sends a demand to the Caliph for the immediate surrender of Firdausi, coupled with a threat of instant invasion of the Caliph's dominions in case of refusal. Firdausi, in order to avert the threatened warfare, voluntarily leaves Bagdad and seeks Tous, his native town. Mahmoud then repents of his niggardliness and anger, and sends the sixty thousand drachms in gold, as originally promised, to Firdausi, but his slaves do not reach Tous with the gold until after the poet is dead.

NOTE 15, PAGE 163. — *The Disciples* is a poetical history of Mazzini and his followers in their struggles for a free Italy, and was undertaken by the authoress at the suggestion of Mazzini himself. It consists of the overture and four books, as follows: *The Overture* contains some four hundred lines, and explains the purpose of the poem and history of its composition. Book I., *Jacopo Ruffini*, a monologue in rhyme of some three hundred lines, wherein the speaker is Jacopo Ruffini, one of the earliest of Mazzini's friends, and who committed suicide in his cell at Genoa in 1833, after the unsuccessful insurrection in that year of the Young Italy party, which is the theme of the monologue. Book II., *Ugo Bassi*, is the longest in the poem, and contains some six thousand lines. It is in form a monologue spoken by Antonio Letti, a peasant lad in an Alpine village, and the subject is the history of Ugo Bassi, a priest of the Order of Saint Barnabas. The book is divided into seven parts, and relates the various struggles of the Young Italy party from the time of the flight of Pius IX. to Gaeta, shortly after the assassi-

nation of his minister Rossi in November, 1848, to the capture of Rome, and overthrow of the short-lived Roman Republic by the treachery of the French General Oudinot, in July of the following year; and contains also a personal history of Ugo Bassi himself, and an account of his execution at Bologna in August, 1849, for participation in the Republican struggle at Rome. Book III., *Agesilao Milano*, a short monologue of twenty verses. Book IV., *Baron Giovanni Nicotera*, a short lyric of thirty-nine six-line verses, of which the theme is the trial and sentence of Baron Giovanni Nicotera and his followers at Salerno in 1858, for participation in the attempt undertaken at the command of Mazzini to liberate the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

NOTE 16, PAGE 189.—*Sister Annunciata* contains about fifteen hundred lines. It is a monologue wherein the speaker is a nun, who has been commanded by the Abbess to celebrate the first anniversary of her entrance into the Sisterhood, by an all-night vigil in the chapel of the convent.

NOTE 17, PAGE 211.—‘Jützi Schultheiss, a Mediæval Mystic, loses her gift of trance and vision, because in a moment of anger she refuses to pray for some turbulent knights.’ *Author’s Note*.

NOTE 18, PAGE 232.—*To a Young Murderess* originally appeared as the prologue to *Chaitivel; or, the Lays of Love Unfortunate*, in the *Lays of France*.

NOTE 19, PAGE 237.—*Lucile* contains about seven thousand five hundred lines, and is divided into two parts each of which contains six cantos. The following is a brief outline of the story told in the poem: Lord Alfred Vargrave shortly before his marriage with Miss Matilda Darcy is requested by Lucile, Comtesse de Nevers, to whom he had been engaged for a short time, ten years previous, to return the letters written to him by the Comtesse during the period of their engagement. Lord Vargrave complies with the request in person, and in the course of his visit learns to regret the broken engagement and urges her to marry him. Lucile, although loving Vargrave sincerely, refuses on the ground that he is already pledged to another, and at the same time refuses another offer of marriage from a French lord, the Duke of Luvois, who attributes the refusal to Vargrave’s influence over Lucile. After Vargrave’s marriage with Matilda, he and his wife meet the Duke and Lucile at Ems, when Luvois, whose anger at Vargrave has not yet cooled, seeks to cause the unhappiness of Matilda by inspiring her with jealousy of Lucile, and at the same time offering to become her lover; but the plot is frustrated by

the tact of Lucile. Subsequently Lord Vargrave's son and Constance, the niece and ward of the Duke mutually love one another, but their marriage is strictly forbidden by the Duke on account of his former grudge against Vargrave. The boy is wounded at the battle of Inkerman, and the Duke, who is serving as a general in the French army, is persuaded to withdraw his opposition to the marriage through the influence of Lucile, who has visited the battlefield in the character of a Sister of Charity.

NOTE 20, PAGE 258. — *The Judgment of Prometheus* is a short poem of some two hundred and fifty lines. The author has the following explanatory note prefixed to it: 'Strife having arisen between Zeus and Poseidon for the sake of Thetis, daughter of Nereus the sea-god, Prometheus was delivered from bondage on Caucasus, and called to declare the award of Fate known to him alone.' The selection given commences just after Prometheus is represented as having made the award.

NOTE 21, PAGE 312. — *The Fortunate Islands*. 'This piece is a rhymed loose version of a passage in the *Vera Historia* of Lucian. The humorist was unable to resist the temptation to introduce passages of mockery, which are here omitted. Part of his description of the Isles of the Blest has a close and singular resemblance to the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. The clear River of Life and the prodigality of gold and of precious stones may especially be noticed.' *Author's note*. The author has also the following note explanatory of the lines in italics commencing 'Whoso doth taste the dead man's bread,' *et seq.*, page 316. 'This belief that the living may visit, on occasion, the dwellings of the dead, but can never return to earth if they taste the food of the departed, is expressed in myths of world-wide distribution. Because she ate the pomegranate seed, Persephone became subject to the spell of Hades. In Apuleius, Psyche, when she visits the place of souls, is advised to abstain from food. Kohl found the myth among the Ojibbeways, Mr. Codrington among the Solomon Islanders; it occurs in Samoa, in the Finnish Kalewala (where Wainamoinen, in Pohjola, refrains from touching meat or drink), and the belief has left its mark on the mediæval ballad of Thomas of Ercildoune. When he is in Fairy Land, the Fairy Queen supplies him with the bread and wine of earth, and will not suffer him to touch the fruits which grow "in this countrie." See also "Wandering Willie" in *Redgauntlet*.'

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INITIALS AND PSEUDONYMS.

THE authority is, in most cases, *Initials and Pseudonyms* by William Cushing, B. A., 1885. The pseudonyms used by an author in his prose as well as his poetical works are included, but not the author's own initials when they have been used as a literary disguise in either instance.

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